

## Israel navy abducts Lebanese fishermen

TYRE (AFP) — Israel abducted Monday two Lebanese fishermen off the southern port city of Tyre after opening machine-gun fire on them, security sources said. An Israeli navy gunboat fired at six Lebanese fishing boats about one kilometre south of Tyre at dawn, they said. Four of the fishing boats managed to escape while two of them were seized by the gunboat, they added. Mohammad Bawwab, president of the fishermen's syndicate, told Agence France Presse that two fishermen aboard one of the two remaining small boats were interrogated for two hours offshore by Israeli navy officers. He said two other fishermen, identified as Hussein Othman and Hani Birnawi, were abducted with their boat and taken to an unknown destination.

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## Iraq offers its citizenship to Arabs

BAGHDAD (AFP) — President Saddam Hussein has offered Iraqi citizenship to all Arabs, except for Palestinians, official newspapers announced Monday. Under a presidential decree, any person aged over 18, born of Arab parents and living in the region now has the right to an Iraqi passport within three months of filing an application. Newspapers said the decision fell within the policies of Arab unity advocated by the Baath Party, which has been in power since 1968. "If the Interior Ministry decides not to grant Iraqi nationality to an individual for whatever reason, it will have to explain the decision to the president's office," according to the decree. Palestinians are excluded because Iraq, which portrays itself as a champion of their cause, does not want to encourage them to abandon their lands and own nationality, newspaper said.

## U.S. air force chief steps down over Saudi bombing

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Air Force chief of staff, General Ronald Fogleman, has submitted his resignation and differences over responsibility for security lapses that led to the death of 19 U.S. Airmen in a guerrilla bombing in Saudi Arabia last year, Pentagon officials said. Air force officials said Gen. Fogleman, a member of the joint chiefs of staff, had requested early retirement no later than September 1.

## Turkish police arrest Islamist demonstrators

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish police arrested 11 demonstrators at an illegal Islamist protest against government plans to shut down religious high schools. Anatolian news agency said that banners in Arabic and Turkish were also seized at the demonstration after prayers Sunday at Istanbul's Beyazit mosque, often the scene of Islamist protests. The government of Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz has said it will expand secularist education in a bill due to be voted on in parliament in the coming weeks. The bill would effectively close Islamic schools if it were passed.

## Egypt expels Saudi policeman

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt on Monday ordered the expulsion of a Saudi businessman and banned him from returning here after he beat up a police officer over the weekend, police sources said. Fahd Mohammad Zoafi allegedly beat up police Lieutenant Ashraf Awadi when the latter stopped him because he was driving a car with Saudi licence plates in violation of Egyptian laws on a main Cairo Street, they said. The incident occurred on Saturday on the busy Jameat Al Duwal Al Arabiya street in the residential neighbourhood of Muhandiseen. The Egyptian Interior Ministry confirmed the incident and the expulsion order but would not identify the man involved, saying only that he was of Arab nationality.

## MPs call to expel Iraq after torture reports

LONDON (AFP) — The British government has been urged to put pressure on FIFA, international football's ruling body, to expel Iraq after reports that the country's World Cup squad were tortured after losing a match. Seven Tory MPs urged the government to "ensure that Iraq is immediately expelled from international competition until these human rights abuses are brought to an end and those responsible punished." They expressed concerns about newspaper claims that President Saddam Hussein's son Uday ordered the team — knocked out of the World Cup finals after losing 3-1 to Kazakhstan — to Radwaniyah military base. The players were "crammed on the soles of their feet, beaten on their backs and threatened with indefinite imprisonment," the MPs said in a common early day motion. Iraqi dissidents claimed earlier this month that Uday ordered that the team be imprisoned and tortured and have their hair and moustaches shaved off on their return to Iraq from the match in Kazakhstan.

## After meeting, Levi and Shaath announce talks to resume in days

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israelis and Palestinians took a step forward Monday towards ending their four-month crisis, announcing they would resume negotiations on implementing outstanding aspects of their peace accords.

"We are deciding to return to the talks ... out of a desire to restore mutual trust," Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi said after meeting with Palestinian Planning Minister Nabil Shaath in Jerusalem.

There was no indication, however, that the sides resolved the major issues bedeviling the talks: the Palestinians' demand for a halt to Israeli building in disputed territories, and Israel's demand for a renewal of intelligence-sharing.

Mr. Shaath said he "emphasised" to Mr. Levi the Palestinians' commitment "on security matters and on prevention ... of all acts that would injure, harm or create violence against Israelis and Palestinians."

Israeli sources said Israel was pleased recently by the Palestinians' improved security cooperation, noting the arrest of Palestinian officers Israel charged were planning attacks on Israeli and the discovery of a bomb-making factory near Bethlehem.

Messrs. Levi and Shaath said bilateral committees — whose work has been mostly frozen since March — would resume work "in the next few days" on outstanding issues from the Israel-Palestinian peace agreements.

Those issues include the opening of a Palestinian airport and sea port in the

Gaza Strip, establishment of a "safe passage" for travel between the West Bank and Gaza, and the release of Palestinian prisoners.

There was no mention of a settlement freeze by Israel.

Monday's announcement did not appear to be related to American efforts to restart the talks, although officials from both sides had travelled to Washington in recent days and U.S. envoy Dennis Ross is expected back in the region within the next two weeks.

Its timing may have been affected by pressure building over a decision by Jerusalem's mayor last week to allow construction of another Jewish settlement in Ras Al Amoud, an Arab neighbourhood in the heart of east Jerusalem, which Palestinians want as the capital of a future state.

Mr. Netanyahu said he opposed building the politically sensitive project, and assured the Palestinians it would not go forward.

Mr. Shaath said Mr. Netanyahu's opposition to the project "contributes to the confidence that is being built and creates a better atmosphere for the future."

The Palestinians had demanded a halt to all Israeli settlement activity, but Mr. Shaath said such issues would be dealt with after the talks are resumed.

Mr. Shaath's deputy, Anis Al Qaq, said the Palestinians expected to see tangible results from the committee meetings within the next few weeks "to prevent an explosion."

"We feel maybe if we exchange confidence-building measures, it will make it easier to tackle these difficult issues in a short

## Knesset speaker approves vote on Golan Heights bill

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's parliament speaker on Monday rejected demands to hold a new vote on a controversial bill that would make it more difficult for Israel to return any of the Golan Heights to Syria and hinder efforts to renew peace talks.

"The process was appropriate and in accordance to regulations, and I therefore approve the vote," Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon announced.

Opposition lawmakers say Mr. Tichon caught them off guard when he held the July 24 vote also, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and cabinet ministers drew criticism for voting in favour of the bill even though the government had announced it opposed it.

The bill, proposed by a lawmaker from Mr. Netanyahu's ruling Likud party, would require that any pullout from the strategic plateau be approved by at least 80 members of the 120-seat parliament. The 43-40 vote was a preliminary reading.

If the bill passes the required three further readings, it could block hopes of resuming peace talks with Syria, which have been on hold for over a year.

Before the vote last Wednesday, the opposition had succeeded in repelling a separate bill that would have required that any land concessions both pass a referendum and win an absolute majority of 61 in the Knesset. But in their joy, opposition members were apparently caught unaware by the second vote many did not vote, and one unintentionally voted in favour of it.

A tumult broke out on the Knesset floor, with opposition leader Ehud Barak demanding that the vote be held again.

Haim Ramon, a leader of the opposition Labour party, said Mr. Tichon's decision to reject that demand may be technically legal but "against logic."

"There was complete pandemonium in the Knesset," Mr. Ramon said. "Tichon should not have held the vote. It was very dishonourable."

Israel occupied the Golan in the 1967 war and unilaterally annexed it in 1981. Under the previous Labour government, Israel and Syria were close to a Golan-for-Peace deal. The talks have been frozen under Mr. Netanyahu, who opposes a total pullout from the Golan but has not ruled out a territorial compromise.

time," he said.

The approval of Miami businessman Irving Moskowitz's plans to build a 70-unit housing project in Ras Al Amoud drew warnings from Palestinians and Israeli security officials that it could set off a new explosion of violence.

The Ras Al Amoud proposal came up against other hurdles Monday. Archaeologists said a

first-century cemetery occupies the site and interior ministry officials said construction would have to await an appeal by two city council members from Israel's left-wing Meretz party. Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein submitted an opinion that it was possible for the government to stop the construction even if permits had been given.



Jordanian military pilots carry the flag-wrapped coffin of their colleague, ace pilot Omar Hani Bilal, at the Royal Cemetery in Amman, Monday. Bilal, 28, was killed in a daredevil plane dive during an air show in Belgium. Nine people were killed in the crash (AFP photo)

## Omar Bilal laid to rest

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday delegated His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the chief chamberlain, to attend the funeral of the late Omar Bani Bilal, member of the Jordanian Royal Falcons team, who died Saturday when his plane crashed during a stunt manoeuvre at a Belgian air show near Ostende.

The body of the late pilot, which arrived early Monday morning in Amman, was carried by Jordanian Royal Airforce officers from the Royal Guard Mosque to the royal cemetery where it was laid to rest.

The late Bilal was accorded full military honours, with a 21-gun salute as the Jordanian Armed Forces

band played requiem music. Taking part in the funeral were also the Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh, several members of the Royal family and senior government officials and high ranking army officers in addition to members of the bereaved Bilal family as well as the members of the Jordanian Royal Falcons team.

King Hussein had earlier delegated Brigadier Mohammad Shmeisani from the Royal Jordanian Airforce to receive the body of the late pilot upon his arrival in Amman.

Also His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan delegated Colonel Nawaf Saraireh, his military secretary, to be present at the

arrival of Bilal's body by plane from Belgium while Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali who is currently in Malaysia delegated Amman Governor Talaat Nawaiseb to attend the funeral.

The late Bilal who had taken part in a number of air shows in Britain and France, was due to perform in Turkey and Italy.

King Hussein who had decorated him with Al Hussein Silver Medal for his skill expressed sorrow over his death and conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family, his colleagues in the Jordanian Royal Falcons and the Royal Jordanian Airforce.

## Crown Prince asks foreign ministry to work on reactivating joint Arab action

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday underlined the importance of developing sectoral cooperation among the state's different institutions and integration among various departments concerned with cooperation with foreign nations.

Addressing a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended by Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Prince Hassan also stressed the need to rely on informatics that take into consideration Jordan's political, security, cultural and economic requirements.

Prince Hassan also called on the foreign ministry to strengthen inter-relationships with Arab and regional institutions and to reactivate joint Arab action which, he said, constitutes a priority for Jordan.

The Crown Prince said that Jordan continues to build balanced relations with various

international organisations and countries with the aim of serving the interests of the Kingdom which enjoys high international esteem under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein.

Prince Hassan emphasised that "globalisation has become a fact of life which we should deal with and benefit from its opportunities through qualified Jordanian potentials, through full understanding of the influential forces in the international arena and by relying on science and knowledge in our quest to reflect a bright image of Jordan."

He said: "Jordan's diplomatic policy should be integrated in its economic, political, security and cultural dimensions and should be based on knowledge and informatics covering all issues."

Prince Hassan called for

developing the process of cooperation and coordination among the Jordanian diplomatic missions around the world because, he said, this will enhance the role of Jordan's diplomacy.

He urged diplomats to be well-equipped with knowledge about Jordan's issues and pan-Arab stands and the Kingdom's efforts to serve the Arab Nation.

Addressing the meeting which was also attended by Acting Prime Minister Abdulhassan Ensour, Dr. Tarawneh welcomed the Crown Prince and his directives stressing that the ministry was developing its coordination with other government institutions to better its performance and in order to reflect better Jordan's image to the outside world.

He spoke about the ministry's restructuring plans and the modernisation process its going through.

## Israeli army bombards south Lebanon

SAIDOUN, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli jets and artillery bombarded guerrilla positions in southern Lebanon Monday in apparent retaliation for an attack against allied militiamen, security officials said.

An Israeli jet fired four air-to-surface missiles at the Hizbollah guerrilla stronghold of Iqlim Al Tuffah early Monday afternoon while a second warplane released hot air balloons to deflect any heat-seeking missiles.

Plumes of smoke billowed from the stricken targets near the village of Kfar Melki just across from the Israeli-occupied border enclave in the south, the officials said,

speaking on customary condition of anonymity. Israeli artillery fired 40 155mm-shells, the officials added.

There was no immediate word on casualties from the attacks, which came about an hour after Hizbollah guerrillas attacked an outpost of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army militia.

The Israelis have routinely retaliated for attacks against their troops or allied militiamen in southern Lebanon with artillery and air raids.

Guerrillas fired rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns at a militia outpost at Saidoun, near the mountain town of

Jezzine. There was no word on casualties.

The Iranian-backed Hizbollah, however, said it inflicted casualties in the raid, but gave no details.

On Sunday, Hizbollah attacked another militia outpost further south, seriously wounding a fighter.

The 2,500-member militia is paid and armed by Israel to help 1,500 Israeli soldiers patrol the occupied border enclave.

Hizbollah and other guerrilla groups have been waging a war of attrition to dislodge Israeli soldiers and the allied militiamen from the enclave.

## Victorious sports teams return home to national celebrations

Jordan clinches 10 gold, 8 silver and 21 bronze medals

By Elia Nasrallah and Aileen Bannayan  
Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor along with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, president of the Jordan Soccer Federation, Monday welcomed home the Jordanian national teams who took part in the 8th Pan-Arab Games in Beirut.

Also present to welcome the national teams, who arrived on board a military plane, were other members of the Royal family, acting Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour, Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh, ministers and other officials.

The King and Queen congratulated the teams, who clinched ten gold medals, eight silver and twenty one bronze.

The national teams were accorded a tumultuous welcome at the airport and all along the streets that led from the airport to the Sports City by cheering crowds who carried Jordanian flags and showered the teams with flowers.

People from all corners of the country converged on Amman to welcome the national teams and gathered at the Sports City for the main celebration in

honour of the team members. Prince Abdullah Monday received a cable of congratulations from Sheikh Hamad Ben Issa Al Khalifah, the Crown Prince of Bahrain on the Jordanian national soccer team's winning of the gold medal upon the conclusion of the Pan-Arab Games in Beirut.

The Kingdom's karate, taekwondo, swimming and wrestling teams in addition to the media and delegation officials arrived together with the soccer team who won the gold medal after a 1-0 win over Syria Sunday night capping a record-breaking Jordanian participation at the 8th Pan-Arab Games.

The Kingdom's win in the soccer final was Jordan's biggest sporting achievement. Jordan's only previous gold medal in team sports at the Pan-Arab Games came when the basketball team clinched first place in the 1985 Games in Morocco.

Jordan impressed onlookers and eliminated Kuwait on their way to the final of the event in which eight countries took part including Lebanon, Oman, Libya, the UAE, Syria and Mauritania.

Jordan finished 5th overall among 19 competing countries in the best Jordanian showing to date since the event was first

held in 1953.

Jordan took a total of 39 medals including 10 gold, 8 silver and 21 bronze medals in the two-week-long event as 94 men and 33 women athletes competed in 14 of the 20 events.

The Kingdom's athletes gained more gold medals in Beirut than in the past 7 Pan-Arab Games altogether.

The games have been held only seven times since 1953, and Jordan participated in all past Pan-Arab Games gaining a total of 49 medals including 7 gold, 16 silver, 26 bronze.

On the sidelines of the competition, Jordan received approval to host the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 2001. Kuwait was chosen as a substitute in case Jordan withdrew their bid.

With Iraqi athletes barred from competition because of a boycott threat by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, 3,000 athletes took part in the Beirut games and only Somalia and the Comoros were absent, making it the largest gathering of Arab youth since the event was last held in Syria in 1992.

Jordan's results were impressive in most sports especially the taekwondo team who earned a total of 13 medals (4 golds, 3 silver and 6 bronze).

The boxers won five medals (2 gold and 3

bronze). Jordan also got five medals in athletics (2 gold, 1 silver, 2 bronze).

Other medals included three bronze in weightlifting; a silver and bronze in fencing and a silver in judo.

Jordan also added a gold medal in Graeco-Roman wrestling, and a silver in freestyle wrestling.

In karate, Jordan grabbed a silver and three bronze medals.

And in table tennis, they took two bronze in the doubles and the team event.

In women's basketball, Jordan finished fourth while the men came in 6th. Jordan was eliminated from the shooting and equestrian events while Hana Majaj took the only swimming bronze medal making up for otherwise disappointing results by her teammates.

Lebanon hosted the Arab World's premier sports event for the first time since the second Arab Games in 1957.

The Pan-Arab Games were held in Alexandria 1953, Beirut 1957, Casablanca 1961, Cairo 1965, Damascus 1976, Rabat 1985 and Damascus 1992.

(See stories and pictures on pages 11 and 12)





An Iraqi man puts up a portrait of Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad in Baghdad Monday as relations between Iraq and Syria, which are ruled by rival wings of the Baath party, have warmed over the last three months following an 18-year break of diplomatic relations (AFP photo)

## Opposition says more Shiites arrested, harassed in Saudi Arabia

NICOSIA (AFP) — Saudi authorities have arrested more Shiite Muslims and slapped a travel ban on the wife of an opposition figure held in the United States in connection with the Dhahran bombing, the opposition charged Monday.

The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in the Arabian Peninsula listed three Shiites it said were arrested last week in the eastern province, where the large Shiite minority is concentrated.

Searches and arrests are being carried out "on a daily basis" in eastern Saudi Arabia, the group said in a statement sent to AFP.

"Hundreds of clerics and other citizens are rotting in the jails of the Saudi regime, some of whom have been there for years, and they are subjected to torture," said the London-based group.

It said Saudi authorities have also slapped a travel ban on the wife of Hani Sayegh, who is under arrest in the United States in connection with the June 1996 bomb attack in the eastern city of Dhahran that killed 19 U.S. servicemen.

## Arafat not eyeing radical internal change — sources

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat is considering limited alterations in his self-rule government but not a sweeping cabinet reshuffle, Palestinian sources said Monday.

Despite calls for the dismissal of ministers by a special commission investigating pervasive mismanagement, Mr. Arafat will not push "a radical cabinet change," said an official close to Palestinian leader.

"Arafat is expected to make a series of moves such as combining some ministries and making structural changes in some others to straighten out their finances and administration," said the official, who asked not to be named.

"Right now he is naming

ministers to replace those who are too ill to conduct their duties," he added. Talk of a sweeping change in the self-rule government arose after a special commission submitted a report a week ago to Mr. Arafat recommending the sacking of several ministers for mismanaging public funds.

Mr. Arafat created the commission to investigate an internal audit which found two months ago that some \$326 million, 40 per cent of the self-rule budget, had been wasted or mismanaged by PNA departments in 1996.

Reports of a reshuffle increased with the resignation last week of Mr. Arafat's controversial justice minister, Freih Abu

Midein. But so far Mr. Arafat has made no moves to touch the cabinet. He has yet to appoint either a new justice minister or a new tourism minister to replace Elias Freij, who resigned several months ago for health reasons.

He may also replace Industry Minister Bashir Barghouti, who has been unable to conduct his duties due to repeated hospitalizations.

"The commission report was discussed last Friday in the weekly cabinet meeting and it was decided to hold a special session to discuss it once Arafat finishes reading it," the official said.

"Only one copy has been made and Arafat has it," he said.

## Late Jawahri may not be buried in home town for political reasons

CAIRO (AP) — Mohammed Mahdi Jawahri, the renowned Iraqi poet whose struggle against repressive regimes led admirers to dub him "the singer for the sunlit" died Sunday. He was 97.

Mr. Jawahri died in Damascus' Al Shami Hospital, the Syrian Arab News Agency reported. It gave no cause of death.

Mr. Jawahri had lived in Damascus since 1979 after fleeing Iraq. In 1995, President Saddam Hussein's government stripped him of his citizenship after he visited Saudi Arabia to participate in a cultural festival. Iraq and Saudi Arabia have

long been adversaries. "He was a poet, a writer and a warrior for liberty and justice," said Saad Al Din Wahab, head of the Egyptian Writers Union.

Mr. Jawahri received awards from Arab heads of state including the late Egyptian president, Gamal Abdul Nasser, Morocco's King Hassan and His Majesty King Hussein.

Mr. Jawahri, the last of the classical Arab poets, was born in Najaf to a poor Shiite Muslim family in 1900. He soon became famous for his poetry and in his early twenties he became a courtier of Iraq's King Faisal.

Mr. Jawahri left his post to become an independent journalist after disagreements with the monarch.

He later used his position at the Al Rai Al Am newspaper to write against the monarchy and its British protectors. He was repeatedly jailed and later fled the country.

He returned to Iraq after the 1958 army coup but later fled following disagreements with the government. He returned again after the 1968 coup.

He fled Iraq in the early 1970s after the regime began a brutal campaign against leftists and communists.

## Israeli foreign minister to meet King for talks today

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy will travel to Jordan Tuesday for talks with His Majesty King Hussein on the Middle East peace process, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday.

"On the agenda is a briefing for the King on the peace process, on Levy's meetings with [Palestinian President Yasser] Arafat and [PNA negotiator] Nabil Shaath and on the general

situation in the Middle East," spokesman Aviv Shir-On said.

Mr. Levy met Mr. Arafat in Brussels last week and was due to hold talks with Mr. Shaath in Jerusalem later Monday.

Israeli-Palestinian peace moves have been in crisis since Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu broke ground on a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem on land Israel

occupied from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war.

"There are also bilateral trade issues and the issue of the joint airport in Aqaba," Mr. Shir-On said.

Mr. Levy was due to depart for Amman at 10 a.m. and will first meet Foreign Minister Fayez Al Tarawneh before holding talks with HRH Crown Prince Hassan and King Hussein.

Israel and Jordan signed a

peace treaty in 1994 but relations have been rocky since Mr. Netanyahu ousted Israel's previous dovish government in May 1996 elections.

HRH King Hussein, Israel's closest Arab friend, has expressed growing frustration with Mr. Netanyahu over stalled Middle East peacemaking and has said he is "despairing" of the situation in the region.

## Australian air hostess appeals four-year jail term for hashish

SHARJAH (AFP) — An Australian air hostess Monday appealed against a four-year prison sentence for smoking hashish along with two co-defendants, including an Emirati who has been jailed for life.

The court session in Sharjah, a member of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), was adjourned until September 24 at the request of the defence which asked for more time to produce witnesses, legal sources said.

Along with Julia Alexander, who was sentenced on June 21, UAE national Jamal Ghafur whose mother is a U.S. citizen was jailed for life on the additional charge of trading in drugs, they said.

A third accused, Lebanese national Roger Louis Ghaleb, received the same four-year sentence as Alexander.

All three have lodged appeals, along with the prosecution, which is seeking a reversal of Alexander's acquittal on charges of dealing in Valium, a drug restricted in the UAE.

"Her spirits are high. She's optimistic," said Australian Consul General John Yeudall, who has been in court for all the hearings.

"Part of our role is to monitor her welfare. We visit her on a regular basis. She has food, clothing and medical attention," he told AFP. "We are doing everything that can be done."

The legal sources said that Alexander's use of drugs was confirmed in a urine analysis.

The hostess for the Dubai-owned Emirates airlines was also found in possession of 18 Valium capsules. She has said the pills were prescribed by a doctor and that she smoked the hashish before flying back to the UAE.

## Kuwaiti cabinet backs draft law for expatriate health insurance

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's cabinet has approved a draft law to impose health insurance on expatriates who currently receive free state medical services, the daily Arab Times said Monday.

"The draft law... aims at providing medical care for expatriates through the health insurance scheme," the English-language daily said, adding that ministers did not release details of the cost of the scheme.

Prior to cabinet approval, MP Ahmad Baqer told AFP

that the insurance may involve an annual premium of 100 dinars (\$330) for each expatriate, to be paid by the employer.

Earlier reports have suggested lower premiums. "We have 1.35 million non-Kuwaitis in Kuwait. We can't support them all," said Mr. Baqer, who is on the committee involved in drawing up the draft law.

The Arab Times said the cabinet approved the draft with some amendments. Premiums could vary depending on the level of

cover required and the length of time each expatriate has spent in Kuwait, it said.

To become law, the draft must be passed by parliament and then approved by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Kuwait has a population of about 2.1 million people, of which some 738,000 are citizens. At present, citizens and expatriates receive free state health care, although expatriate out-patients must pay for some drugs.

## France's defence minister meets Saudi counterpart

DUBAI (R) — French Defence Minister Alain Richard held talks on bilateral co-operation with his Saudi counterpart Prince Sultan in the port city of Jeddah, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said late on Sunday.

Mr. Richard, who was appointed in June after parliamentary elections, made a detour to the kingdom on his way from Egypt to France for what Prince Sultan had called a "familiarisation visit."

"We support cooperation between the two friendly countries, the kingdom and France, in terms of economic cooperation and the development of joint industries between the two countries," Prince Sultan said in remarks carried by SPA.

Mr. Richard returned to France on Sunday after spending several hours in the kingdom.

France, which buys one quarter of its oil from Saudi Arabia, is the kingdom's third biggest arms supplier after the United States and Britain. Weapons sales average \$1.2 billion a year.

France is trying to convince Saudi Arabia to buy Leclerc main battle tanks made by Giat Industries, similar to those sold for

\$3.62 billion to the neighbouring United Arab Emirates in 1993.

It is competing with Britain and the United States for the major arms contract after its tanks were tested in the Saudi desert at Riyadh's request.

Mr. Richard declined to comment on the results of tests performed with the tanks.

But after his return to Paris, officials in Mr. Richard's office told reporters Saudi authorities were satisfied with the Leclerc tests in their country.

"The minister did not come to negotiate contracts. That is the task of the industrialists. The government's role is to see if everything is going well and eventually to bring its expertise," a spokesman said.

He added that Saudi Arabia was not expected to take a decision on tank purchases until the middle of next year and that the contract at stake was for some 300 vehicles.

The two men also discussed the Middle East peace process, ties with Iraq and Iran as well as security in the Gulf, and "agreed on most regional problems," the spokesman added.

## Pakistan beheaded in Saudi

RIYADH (AP) — A Pakistani man convicted of drug trafficking was beheaded in Saudi Arabia Monday, rising to 72 the number of people executed in the kingdom this year.

Abdul Rahman Khan Masani was found guilty of smuggling an undisclosed quantity of heroin into Saudi Arabia, an Interior Ministry statement said. He was beheaded "in the capital Riyadh."

With Masani's execution, the number of beheadings this year surpassed last year's total of 71.

The kingdom has executed 35 drug traffickers this year.

Saudi Arabia's Islamic courts impose the death penalty for rape, murder, drug trafficking and armed robbery. People convicted of those crimes are beheaded in public with a sword.

Human rights groups have criticised the executions on grounds they follow trials in which suspects are not represented by lawyers and are denied due process, such as legal appeals.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

### PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 French Programmes  
16:00 Super Sport Folie  
16:30 Dog House  
17:00 Square One TV  
17:15 Album Show  
18:10 French Programmes  
19:00 News in French  
19:30 News Headlines  
19:35 Coach  
20:00 Till  
20:30 Encounter  
21:10 Doc. — Nature of Things  
22:00 News in English  
22:30 West Beach  
23:15 Drug Wars

### PRAYER TIMES

04:14 Fajr  
05:44 (Sunrise) Duha  
12:42 Dhuhur  
16:23 Asr  
19:40 Maghreb  
21:10 Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweith, Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church  
Tel. 632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Annunciation  
Tel. 637440  
De la Salle Church Tel.

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### JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 77311-19

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04:14 Fajr  
05:44 (Sunrise) Duha  
12:42 Dhuhur  
16:23 Asr  
19:40 Maghreb  
21:10 Isha

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Assemblies of God Church  
Tel. 632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Annunciation  
Tel. 637440  
De la Salle Church Tel.

### JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 77311-19

### PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 French Programmes  
16:00 Super Sport Folie  
16:30 Dog House  
17:00 Square One TV  
17:15 Album Show  
18:10 French Programmes  
19:00 News in French  
19:30 News Headlines  
19:35 Coach  
20:00 Till  
20:30 Encounter  
21:10 Doc. — Nature of Things  
22:00 News in English  
22:30 West Beach  
23:15 Drug Wars

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MUSIC  
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EXHIBITIONS



## Queen visits BPWC headquarters

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday visited the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) headquarters in Amman, a Royal Court statement said.

The club's four main projects are business incubators and small business counselling for women, information and documentation for women's studies, and a legal consultative service office for women. Queen Noor, honorary president of the National Federation of BPWC, noted that according to recent statistics unemployment among women has risen to 34.3 per cent, as compared to men at 14.5 per cent, mainly due to women's unequal access to economic resources, the statement said.

She emphasised the importance of providing women with better access to soft loans for income-generating projects, especially as micro-enterprises run by women have proven to have a high rate of success, the statement said.

The Queen said that the BPWC's new "business incubator service for women," which is the first of its kind in Jordan and in the Arab World, will relieve women entrepreneurs of the pressure of major personal financial investment as well as access to credit.

The "incubators," which are situated in the BPWC's new headquarters, consist of a private work space area providing computer, phone, fax and photocopying facilities, and are in close proximity to the club's information and documentation centre for women which collects and disseminates up-to-date information with particular emphasis on subjects related to women entrepreneurs.



Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday meets with Sawasn Dababneh of the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) in Amman (Petra photo).

neers, professionals and managers.

These facilities, which are available at minimum cost, will relieve entrepreneurs from a heavy cost burden, according to the statement.

To facilitate loan reception, BPWC will guarantee any approved loans and eventually hope to start their own credit system.

A business advisor is also available to help with small business management skills such as taxation, marketing, accounting and legal questions.

The business incubator service was established in cooperation with the UNIFEM regional office in Amman and is funded through a grant from the Japanese National Cooperation for Community Development (NICCOD).

The BPWC also protects women's legal and social rights by providing free legal advice and representation for needy women in courts of law, and in promoting social, political and environmental pro-

grammes, the statement said.

Its small business counselling, initiated in cooperation with the Nour Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), offers business advice and financial support for women entrepreneurs.

The club has also assisted in the establishment of educational programmes and occupational training programmes for women entrepreneurs.

The BPWC is a voluntary association affiliated with the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, which consists of one million women in 125 countries worldwide, according to the statement.

The BPWC's pioneering programmes which respond to the personal and professional needs of working women from all walks of life, include hotlines, service centres for small businesses, free legal aid and personal counselling and technical training for women.

The club's activities are not only restricted to women, as men actively participate in BPWC's programmes and events, particularly in seminars, lectures and training courses.

The BPWC is currently carrying out a grassroots programme to enhance women's participation in the 1997 parliamentary election in cooperation with the Canadian embassy and the European Union.

The programme aims to increase women's human rights awareness, encourage women to enter the political and electoral processes as voters and candidates, achieve unity and consensus on common causes and exercise influence as pressure groups.

Queen Noor was received by Minister of Labour Saleh Khasawneh, NHF Board of Trustees member Nour Izzedine, BPWC President Hind Abdul Jabbar and members of the BPWC's executive board.

## Opposition parties fail to achieve unified stand regarding general elections boycott

By Francesca Ciriaci  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — With five parties in favour and six opposed, a meeting of the Higher Committee for Coordination among Opposition Parties yesterday failed to achieve a unified stand vis-à-vis the potential boycott of this November's general elections.

"There was no final deliberation — the parties just exchanged their views, and the situation remains basically unchanged," asserted Sa'oud Abu Mahfoudh, member of the executive office of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), and the front's representative in yesterday's meeting.

According to Mr. Abu Mahfoudh, the 11 parties decided to meet again next Monday.

The postponement of a final decision by the higher committee will give both the government and opposition parties more time to study the other's conditions and stands.

Last week, through one of his top aides, His Majesty King Hussein urged that those involved reach a compromise in the situation.

In a meeting with Muslim Brotherhood's overall leader Abdul Majeed Thneibat, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh Wednesday stated that the King "hopes that all parties will shoulder their responsibilities and open a dialogue with the government to reach an agreement in the national interest," as reported by Mr. Thneibat.

A dialogue is very likely to be opened after Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali returns from an official visit to Malaysia at the end of this week.

meet in order to ensure their elections participation.

These were submitted in a memo to the Higher Committee for Coordination among Opposition Parties yesterday.

The conditions stipulate: "Neutrality and impartiality in the electoral process; equal treatment of all parties; halting normalisation of all ties with Israel; equal media access for all parties during the electoral campaign; freezing implementation of recent amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law; treating all parties as national institutions; facilitating citizen electoral participation through simplifying registration and voting procedures."

The party signatories to the memo were: The Jordanian Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, headed by Khalil Hadadin, the Arab Ba'ath Progressive Party, the Arab Lund Party, headed by Mohammed Ouran, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, headed by Said Diab, Jordan's Communist Party, headed by Yacoub Zayyaddin, and the Pan-Arab National Action Party (Al Haq), headed by Mohammed Zou'bi, who currently holds the chair of the Higher Committee for Coordination among Opposition Parties, which rotates among the member parties every six months.

Also yesterday, the IAF justified its July 24 decision to boycott the general elections and stipulated conditions the government must meet for a due resumption of dialogue.

The IAF listed "the low level of public freedoms and the low ceiling of democracy, the marginalisation of the Lower House, the government's usurping of the legislative authority's powers and functions, and the normalisation of ties with the Zionist enemy" as the main motives behind its decision.

associations."

The IAF additionally cited economic factors for the boycott, describing the situation in Jordan as one of "mounting impoverishment, increasing unemployment, and deteriorating economy."

Jordan's main opposition party indicated seven points for dialogue "between the parties themselves as well as between the parties and the government."

These "seven points," as delineated by the IAF, include:

— the abolition of the one-person, one-vote system, "which is unconstitutional and undemocratic";

— the reinstitution of public freedoms as well as the end of the "government's semi-martial law practices";

— the ban against corruption, "which is spreading at the higher levels";

— satisfying the "need for strengthening the country against the Zionist menace, especially [revoking] the investment law which allows the enemy to permeate the national economy";

— strengthening ties with all Arab countries

— providing more support to the Palestinians against the "Judaisation process which threatens Al Aqsa Mosque and other Christian and Islamic holy places all over Palestine."

— enhancing the role of political parties and professional unions, and creating the "proper environment for them to flourish, helping the country achieve security and stability."

"Our decision does not mean that we are closing the door to political participation, nor isolating ourselves, nor changing the plans of our party," the statement continued.

## Princess urges post-mortem organ donation

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Rania Abdullah Monday urged the general dissemination of public awareness programmes regarding post-mortem organ donation.

Such a deed is permissible according to the Islamic law, she added.

The princess, chairperson of the Jordanian Society for the Promotion of Donating Body Parts and Organs, addressed a society meeting at Ibn Al Haytham Hospital to discuss ways of encouraging the public to become such donors.

The conference also covered ways in which medical teams might conduct surgical operations for transplanting donated organs.

Princess Rania encouraged the creation of a national centre to receive donated organs, disseminate information, conduct a general survey of citizen needs of various organs and develop a mechanism for securing organs to initiate transplant operations.

The society's work is fraught with difficulties and hardships but members must pursue its noble and human-

itarian mission, the Princess asserted.

Hospital Director Mohammad Saleh Nour welcomed the Princess, describing the hospital as having provided the necessary qualified staff for transplant operations.

He called for joint work and close cooperation among public and private hospitals in encouraging the public to donate organs.

Princess Rania toured the hospital, accompanied by Dr. Nour and other hospital staff.

## Speaker visits Cyprus for parliamentary talks

LARNACA (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'd Hayel Srour arrived here Monday for talks with Cypriot parliamentarians.

The talks are slated to cover Jordanian-Cypriot economic and political relations as well as the Middle East peace process.

Mr. Srour, accompanied by deputies Abdul Karim Dughmi and Aref Bataineh,

had Sunday stopped in Beirut to meet with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Barri.

The group reviewed Jordanian-Lebanese relations, pan-Arab affairs, parliamentary cooperation and coordination of Arab parliamentary stands at International Parliamentary Union meetings.

Mr. Srour outlined Jordan's views with regard to

developments in the Middle East as well as endeavours to achieve a comprehensive regional peace.

He reiterated the Kingdom's demand for Israel's full withdrawal from south Lebanon as well as that of other occupied Arab lands in compliance with U.N. resolutions.

Mr. Srour and Mr. Barri underlined the need for cooperation among Arab

parliaments in helping to create an Arab common market and reviving Arab interaction.

While in Beirut, the Jordanian parliamentary delegation attended the final soccer match between the Jordanian and Syrian national soccer teams in which Jordan ultimately won the pan-Arab games gold medal.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

## JERASH FESTIVAL

- \* Concert by the Amos Ford String Quartet of Poland at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Concert by Al Al-Hilal of Lebanon at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Concert by Thula Sizwe of South Africa at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Shakespeare's play "Much Ado About Nothing" by the American Higher Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Children's play "The Tale of the Fox" at Gloria Theatre at 8:00 p.m.
- \* Display of handicrafts and sculptures at Zeus' venue.
- \* Musical performance by Schleswig-Holstein and Jordanian musical bands as well as a circus at the main square at 7:00 p.m.
- \* Poetry recitals by Palestinian, Iraqi, and Jordanian poets at Abdul-Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:45 p.m.

## MUSIC

- \* Musical performance by Harvard University band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

## FILM

- \* "How Green Was My Valley" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

## EXHIBITIONS

- \* Paintings and ceramic sculptures by Arab artists at the Orient Gallery, Shmashan (Tel. 681303) until July 31.
- \* Display of Banu Hashim hand-made products at Banu Hashim House, Jabal Amman, until July 31 (Tel. 6366677).
- \* Photo exhibition entitled "Jerusalem in Danger" by Khalid Al-Zuhair at the Modern Educational School, Shmashan, until July 31.
- \* Photography exhibition by Jan Kasey, at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibden, until July 29.
- \* Paintings by Ali Al-Ghoul at Greater Amman Municipality Cultural Department, Ras Al Ain, until July 31.

## Seminar covers water resources protection

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Scientific Society (RSS) President said Alloush Monday opened a three-day symposium on the role of scientific research in protecting water resources in the Arab World.

He urged a regional strategy to prevent water pollution as well as the creation of a database to provide timely information about these resources.

Researchers and specialists from around the Arab World are attending the symposium, organised by the RSS in conjunction with the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) and the Arab Union of Scientific Research Councils (AUSRC).

Much of the Arab World, including Jordan, is faced with limited water resources and yet the population of these countries continues to grow, Dr. Alloush stated. Increasing amounts of water are required to maintain improving standards of living, he added.

Excessive water usage has depleted underground aquifers and negatively impacted the environment, according to Dr. Alloush.

He affirmed that the resulting imbalance will hold grave consequences for future generations, unless strict measures are taken to safeguard underground water resources.

Treating polluted water is much more difficult than preventing the pollution in the first place, according to Dr. Alloush, and public awareness programmes are instrumental in preserving meagre water resources.

He encouraged water treatment and recycling in both homes and industries to be later utilised for irrigation purposes.

HCST Representative Dr. Khaled shreideh stated that water shortages constitute a chronic problem in the Kingdom, and that scientific research to protect water resources is of dire necessity.

The HCST has been focusing on water protection research, classifying water pollutants and conducting water treatment tests, he said.

The participants will cover four main points in the meeting: water pollutants in the Arab World, pollution prevention, international methods of water protection and laws pertaining thereto.

## 12 injured in soccer celebrations

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A total of 12 people, including three children, were injured late Sunday night as a result of "festive firing" and reckless driving by individuals celebrating Jordan's Pan-Arab Games gold medal in soccer, according to officials.

The gold medal marked Jordan's greatest soccer achievement in history and prompted thousands of people to take to the streets, shooting guns and automatic weapons in celebration.

A report released by the Public Security Department (PSD) said that seven people were injured by stray bullets in four separate shooting incidents.

In Ashrafieh, three people, including a five-year-old child, were listed in fair condition after having been struck

by stray bullets.

In Jabal Hussein, a five-year-old child was listed in fair condition, also after being struck by a bullet.

Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials added that five people were injured as a result of reckless driving by individuals celebrating the event.

Last weekend, two people were killed and 13 were injured in shooting incidents stemming from festive shooting, stray bullets and students celebrating tawjihi exam results.

In other incidents in the Kingdom, a six-year old child was killed in Deir Alaa after having been struck by an automobile, PSD reports said.

The child, identified only as A. A., was standing on the edge of the street when she was struck by a vehicle.

Traffic officials blamed the driver for failing to yield to pedestrians.

## 'Photography as method of expression'

By Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Photography is not only a way to catch a feeling and keep it — it is a method of expression, according to photographer, Claudia Pedotti.

Ms. Pedotti's work, entitled "Colours and Flowers," is currently being featured at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Centre, Artisana.

Claudia Pedotti, a 26-year old art history student in Berne, Switzerland, described her interest in photography as inspired by stay in Ecuador two years ago.

"During those years I discovered how much a picture can recall an emotion and become a remembrance," she stated.

"For me, photography is not only concerned with observation nor can it be



Untitled example from photography exhibit of Claudia Pedotti

confined to documentary," Ms. Pedotti stated. "It can become a language."

In her work, Ms. Pedotti tries to express and transmit her own emotions through colours and flowers, feeling that the combination of the two elements

"takes one to a state of lightness and happiness."

Her father has been the Swiss ambassador to Jordan for the past four years which led her visits to the Kingdom.

Ms. Pedotti's previous exhibition was in Switzerland.

land, covering the Jordanian landscape.

"Photography has become necessary for me and an important means of expression," Ms. Pedotti concluded.

The exhibit will continue through August 16th.



# Asian, Western powers debate drugs, currencies

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Drugs, currency and Cambodia were key issues Monday as foreign ministers of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Western powers met under the ASEAN umbrella to discuss global and regional issues.

Russia called for international cooperation, including a data base "open to all interested agencies," to fight the global narcotics trade, while the U.S. slammed Burma as a major drug centre threatening regional stability.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Abdullah Badawi, meanwhile, again accused "hostile elements" and "unscrupulous traders" of attacking southeast Asian currencies.

But a mission from the nine-member ASEAN to help end Cambodia's political crisis remained in limbo until Cambodian strongman Hun Sen clarified what sort of mediation he might accept.

Foreign ministers of ASEAN members Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam and Brunei and newly-joined Burma and Laos are holding their annual series of meetings which include their so-called dialogue partners this week.

The dialogue partners are the U.S., China, Russia,

Japan, the European Union, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, India and South Korea.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told other delegates that drug traffickers "are now leading lights in Burma's new market economy and leading figures in its new political order."

Western powers sharply criticised Rangoon's record on human rights and democracy, have accepted Burma's membership of ASEAN but are pressing the other South East Asian governments to pressure Rangoon for policy changes.

Referring to recent currency turmoil that has primarily hit Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, Ms. Albright said Washington was watching developments very closely and was in close contact with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer gave ASEAN economies a ringing endorsement when asked to comment on the Malaysian minister's attack on speculators.

"The Australian government has every confidence about the fundamental strength of the ASEAN economies...and the success of these economies is a matter of very great importance

to us in Australia," he told reporters at a news briefing.

"ASEAN economies are very big economic partners of ours and any speculation against ASEAN economies or any weakening of ASEAN economies will be a matter of great concern in Australia," he added.

A report by ASEAN Secretary-General Ajit Singh indicated the economic strength of the region.

He said that with the admission of Burma and Laos, ASEAN has a combined population of just over 480 million people, total gross domestic product (GDP) of \$632.5 billion, per capita GDP of \$1,314 and combined exports of almost \$334 billion.

ASEAN calendar 1997 economic growth is forecast at between seven and eight per cent.

Ms. Albright said the region was the fourth largest trading partner for the U.S. with American investment exceeding \$35 billion.

Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda also emphasised Tokyo's interest in South East Asia and said it was determined to support socio-economic development of ASEAN countries through official development aid and other forms of assistance as necessary.

The United States Monday accused Burma of offi-

cially encouraging the drugs trade as narcotics trafficking came under the spotlight at an ASEAN conference.

Ms. Albright, who acknowledged Burma's recent joining of the ASEAN despite Western disapproval, said drug traffickers were "now leading lights in Burma's new market economy and leading figures in its new political order."

"Drug money has become so pervasive in Burma that it taints legitimate investment and threatens the region as a whole," she told the conference.

"Indeed, it is hard to imagine a lasting solution to this region's narcotics problem without a lasting solution to Burma's political crisis."

She said the United States had successfully worked with Thailand and Laos on opium eradication programmes and planned to sponsor more such projects in Laos and elsewhere.

Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov told the 19-nation meeting that drug trafficking and related economic crimes were more than topical.

"We need to cooperate vigorously in joint actions against these evils which in varying degrees and forms are present in all our countries," he said.



A farmer wades through the flooded village of Michalowice in southern Poland. The Oder River has already flooded a vast area of southern Poland, depriving thousands of Poles of homes, flooding towns and villages in eastern Germany (Reuters photo)

## Polish border town fights with river for survival

WARSAW (R) — More than 15,000 people were evacuated Sunday from the Polish town of Slubice on the German border as the surging river Oder nearly swamped the area, but floods receded in other regions of southwestern Poland.

"The situation in Slubice has been really dramatic. The water level surged to just centimetres from the top of dikes and overflowing could have happened any time," crisis committee spokesman Krzysztof Pomes said.

"There is cause for optimism because the water level has begun to slowly go down...but the sudden dikes are weak and may still give in," he said. "Everybody there is doing everything to save the dikes."

The Oder, which reached 6.71 metres, exceeded the alarm level by more than three metres and a breach in the dikes would instantly flood Slubice, situated in a low-lying area, flood committee official Lidia Markindorf said.

Private Radio Zet reported that those who refused to be evacuated from Slubice had to sign special statements declaring they were staying at their own risk.

The evacuation came just as Polish Interior Minister Leszek Miller met his German counterpart Manfred Kanther in Slubice, across the river from Frankfurt an der Oder, to discuss coordinating efforts to combat the disaster.

Earlier Sunday, a dike crumbled on the German side of the Oder, south of Frankfurt, flooding a village.

"Even though the floods are receding...and weather forecasts are optimistic, we are concerned about the state of anti-flood dikes along the Oder and some other rivers. They are weak and soaked through like sponges," Mr. Pomes said.

July's three-week flooding, the worst natural disaster in the region for centuries, killed 55 people in Poland, flooded 6,000 square kilometres of land and caused damage amount-

ing to billions of dollars.

Mr. Pomes said that since Saturday water had retreated from some 200 square kilometres of land and that about 1,900 square kilometres remained under water. More than 50,000 people were still displaced.

Many were complaining that rescue and relief operations were chaotic and that police were not doing enough to stop looting.

"Those who are stronger and also those who are less affected by the flood get more, because they have more time to scramble for aid. I can see no management," said pensioner Stanislaw Kislewski, from the southwestern village of Kowale, one of more than 30 places still inundated.

Ms. Kislewska, who lost all her possessions — a small house, 10 hens and 15 rabbits — in the floods, could not hold back her tears.

"I do not know what I will do when all this ends, just as I did not know what to do when it began. Nobody told us what we should do," she told Reuters.

Meanwhile, the governor of Opole province, severely hit by the floods, accused the State Meteorology and Water Management Institute of incompetence which led to huge damages, the Polish News Agency (PAP) reported.

The governor, Ryszard Zembaczynski, said he would ask prosecutors to examine whether the institute met its statutory obligations of monitoring downpours and warning authorities of weather irregularities on time.

An opinion poll released over the weekend showed the majority of Poles were dissatisfied with the way the government had handled the flood crisis.

The government admitted being initially taken by surprise by the scale of the floods but has defended its response.

It has approved a relief package which offers tax cuts, subsidised housing and investment loans as well as free distribution of food and medicine in the affected regions.

## Hong Kong awaits watershed ruling affecting constitution

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong, under Chinese rule for less than a month, faces a watershed court ruling on its legal system Tuesday with the potential to spark a constitutional crisis.

The Appeal Court is set to rule on a claim, arising out of defence arguments in a criminal conspiracy case, that Hong Kong entered a legal vacuum after China took over from Britain on July 1, and that its criminal laws are no longer valid.

If the ruling recognises this legal void, it will plunge Hong Kong's judicial system into chaos and bring into question the legitimacy of a provisional legislature set up by China.

The government says it has plans to deal with all scenarios, including the worst — nullification of the legislature, which replaced a body elected in 1995.

"We will certainly respect the decision of the court," Justice Secretary Elsie Leung told reporters Sunday night.

"If it turns out the provisional legislature is found to be illegal after all appeal channels have been exhausted, we will adopt the necessary contingency measures," she said.

Mrs. Leung did not say what measures the government had conceived for tackling the worst-case scenario.

But legal experts said if there was a constitutional crisis, Hong Kong's China-appointed leader Tung Chee-hwa could turn to Communist-ruled Beijing and its parliament for solutions.

Hong Kong's constitution, the basic law, derives au-

thority from China's National People's Congress (NPC). The basic law sets the rules on forming a legislature in Hong Kong, and a debate has raged over whether the interim legislature conforms.

The leader of the Popular Democratic Party, Martin Lee, slammed the government's top lawyer Sunday for proposing Hong Kong judges should cede their autonomy to China.

Under the treaty whereby Britain returned the colony to China, Hong Kong is supposed to be virtually autonomous in all but defence and foreign affairs.

"I was sad to hear a senior government lawyer recently telling the Hong Kong courts to voluntarily give up some of their jurisdiction in deference to Beijing. I think this kind of talk is extremely bad for Hong Kong's future," Mr. Lee said.

Solicitor General Daniel Fung, representing the government in the landmark case, had argued in court last week that the judges had no power to rule on the constitutional arguments raised. Only Beijing could rule on this, he said.

Audrey Eu, chairman of the Bar Association, the body which groups Hong Kong's lawyers, lashed out at leader Tung over the weekend for remarks that she said put pressure on the judges.

Mr. Tung said last week he was sure the government would win the case. "There is a principle we must adhere to when a lawsuit is launched, that is one should not openly comment on whether it will win or lose," Ms. Eu said.

Ronald Arculli, a businessman and provisional legislator, said the appeal court might not see fit to rule on the issue.

"I would not be surprised that the court decides that it is not an appropriate case for the legality of the Provisional Legislative Council to be pronounced upon," he told Reuters.

He said, however, that if the legislature was found to be illegal, China's parliament would probably confirm its legality.

The potential legal upheaval is in stark contrast to other aspects of the change of sovereignty in this territory of 6.4 million people.

An opinion poll published Monday showed political confidence unshaken by the handover, and only 10 per cent of people rated Hong Kong's economic prospects as bad.

Another sign of calm change came from China's army garrison, which a Beijing-controlled newspaper said would open its bases to the public and hold celebrations with the local community.

Mr. Tung has carried out a reshuffle of three top government posts less than a month after the territory returned to Chinese rule, the official news agency Xinhua announced Monday.

The appointments, approved last Wednesday by the State Council, China's highest government body, "were based on the recommendations and nominations" submitted by Mr. Tung, it said.

## 64 arrested in Indonesia for marking anniversary of riots

JAKARTA (AFP) — Sixty-four people were arrested for attempting to mark the first anniversary of a deadly riot here sparked by a troop-backed assault on the Indonesian Democracy Party (PDI) headquarters, reports said Monday.

Those arrested "claim to be supporters of Megawati," Jakarta police chief detective Colonel Gories Mere said referring to Megawati Sukarnoputri, the ousted but still popular leader of the PDI.

Police arrested 55 people in Jakarta and nine in Yogyakarta. Central Java, the Antara News Agency (ANA) said.

Col. Mere said the 22 people arrested in east Jakarta, 27 in Central Jakarta and six in South Jakarta, were detained for holding a procession without a permit.

Six of the 55 people were Megawati supporters who had been jailed for slightly more than four months earlier this year after being arrested at the PDI's headquarters on July 27 last year, Col. Mere said.

Five people were killed and 150 were injured in the riot 12 months ago, when scores of buildings and cars were set ablaze in the worst disturbance seen in the Indonesian capital in two decades.

The violence followed the military-backed raid on the PDI headquarters, then in the hands of Megawati supporters.

In Yogyakarta, police arrested nine people after forcefully dispersing a free speech forum held by local students to commemorate the July 27 incident, the ANA said.

The forum, held at a busy square in downtown Yogyakarta, was attended by at least 300 people.

At least one of the nine was released later Sunday, ANA said.

In Jakarta, hundreds of people attempted to lay wreaths at the PDI headquarters Sunday in memory of the victims of the riot but scores of armed police and military personnel, including special units, prevented them from approaching the building.

## Azerbaijan's Aliyev begins U.S. state visit today

TBILISI (R) — Azeri President Heydar Aliyev begins a state visit to the U.S. Monday seeking a bigger American role in ending his country's conflict with Armenia as well as \$10 billion in deals with U.S. oil firms.

Mr. Aliyev, whose plane was expected to arrive in New York late Sunday, will meet President Bill Clinton and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan at U.N. Headquarters there.

The Azeri leader told reporters before departure from the Azeri capital Baku that the nearly decade-old strife between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the region of Nagorno-Karabakh would be at the top of his agenda with Mr. Clinton and Mr. Annan.

Azeri officials say Mr. Aliyev will also sign three contracts worth \$10 billion with U.S. oil giants Exxon,

Chevron and Mobil to develop three new offshore Caspian Sea fields.

Baku has already signed deals worth \$18 billion with foreign firms to develop its Caspian reserves. Mr. Aliyev will be signing the new deals on behalf of state energy company Socar.

Azerbaijan is trying to parlay its increasing world energy importance into political clout to try and woo the West to its side in the conflict with Armenia, which killed more than 35,000 people before a 1994 ceasefire came into effect.

Nagorno-Karabakh is populated by ethnic Armenians but is recognised as part of Azerbaijan. Armenian forces now control it as well as a large chunk of Azeri territory surrounding it.

The Azeris have always blamed the large Armenian

diaspora, with its well-organised lobby, in the U.S. for what it says is a pro-Armenian attitude in Washington.

But the fact that the visit is taking place at all is a huge propaganda coup for Baku over Yerevan and indicates that Azerbaijan's energy importance may already be paying political dividends.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan is the only one of the three leaders of the ex-Soviet Caucasus republics not to be invited to by President Clinton to Washington for talks this summer. Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze visited last week.

Mr. Ter-Petrosyan is still in the West's doghouse over charges that he rigged last year's presidential vote which reelected him. International observers say it was marred by irregularities.

ties.

A U.S. congressman Friday said he will introduce legislation next week to immediately lift a five-year ban on humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan to coincide with Mr. Aliyev's visit.

"America's national interests are being ill served by our current policy in the Caucasus," said New York Republican Congressman Pete King, who is also vice-chairman of the International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

"It is within U.S. national interests to send aid to the former Soviet state to further encourage Azerbaijan's move toward democracy," Mr. King added in a statement.

Pro-Armenian groups in the U.S. have vowed to protest Mr. Aliyev's visit.

## U.K. Labour offers concessions after attacks

LONDON (R) — Britain's ruling Labour Party offered concessions Sunday after party veterans and trade union leaders attacked Prime Minister Tony Blair's reforms.

Labour said local party branches and trade unions would be allowed to submit their own motions to the party's annual conference, according to proposals to be put to Labour's national executive Wednesday.

The move was seen as allaying grassroots fears that the September conference would be no more than a rally to endorse the policies of the leadership.

Mr. Blair has been on a reform drive that shows no sign of cooling after his landslide May 1 election victory.

But Paddy Ashdown, leader of the centrist Liberal

Democrats, forcefully defended Mr. Blair for giving him a chance to influence policy and said Britain was now entering an era of consensus politics.

Less than three months after coming to power with a massive majority in parliament, Mr. Blair last week invited the Liberal Democrats to join a cabinet committee looking into constitutional reform.

This drew fire from Labour left-wing veteran Tony Benn who claimed that the move "would be the beginning of the end of the Labour Party."

Writing in the Observer newspaper, he said Labour was turning into a British version of the U.S. Democrats. This could mean complete disillusionment with politics and low voter turnout as typified by Presi-

dent Bill Clinton's victory.

Former Labour Party deputy leader Roy Hattersley added to the veteran voices of concern. Increasingly disillusioned with the way the party was going, he said it was "no longer a force for a more equal society."

Mr. Blair rejected much socialist dogma and distanced the party from its trade union paymasters in his bid to end almost two decades in the political wilderness of opposition to the Conservatives.

It was a resounding success as he swept to power with a 179-seat majority that he never expected to achieve.

Opinion polls show no sign of the honeymoon period ending for Mr. Blair after almost 100 days in power. But the murmuring of left-wing discontent have not

abated.

Train Drivers' Trade Union leader Lew Adams asked of Labour on the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) Television: "Why don't they listen to the trade unions? Why diminish our role? We worked with the Labour Party to get them into power."

Liberal Democrat leader Ashdown, whose party almost doubled its parliamentary representation to 46 seats in the May 1 election, denied any Labour-Liberal pact was in the offing just because they were cooperating.

He said the British were fed up with "the destructive way of tribal politics" in a country whose first-past-the-post electoral system traditionally leaves one single party to govern alone for five years.

## Score fall sick in Bangladesh camps

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh (R) — Scores of Burmese Muslim refugees have become ill after activists enforced a mass hunger strike in their camps in southeast Bangladesh, officials with local and foreign Non-Government Organizations (NGO) said Monday.

"These people became sick because they had not taken food rations provided by the government for a week. They have been subjected to a mass starvation by their own people," one NGO official told Reuters.

Government officials said they were trying to meet militant leaders to try to

persuade them to end the strike.

"If the situation does not improve soon, maybe people will die from starvation. The good news is that nothing such has happened yet and we are expecting to avert the worst," one relief official said Monday.

The food boycott began on July 20 following clashes between police and so-called "Rohingya" refugees at Nayapara Camp in Cox's Bazar district over alleged attempts to send them home to Burma forcibly.

The Rohingyas are the remnants of scores of thousands of Burmese Muslims who fled neighbouring Bur-

ma to escape what they termed relentless persecution by Burmese authorities.

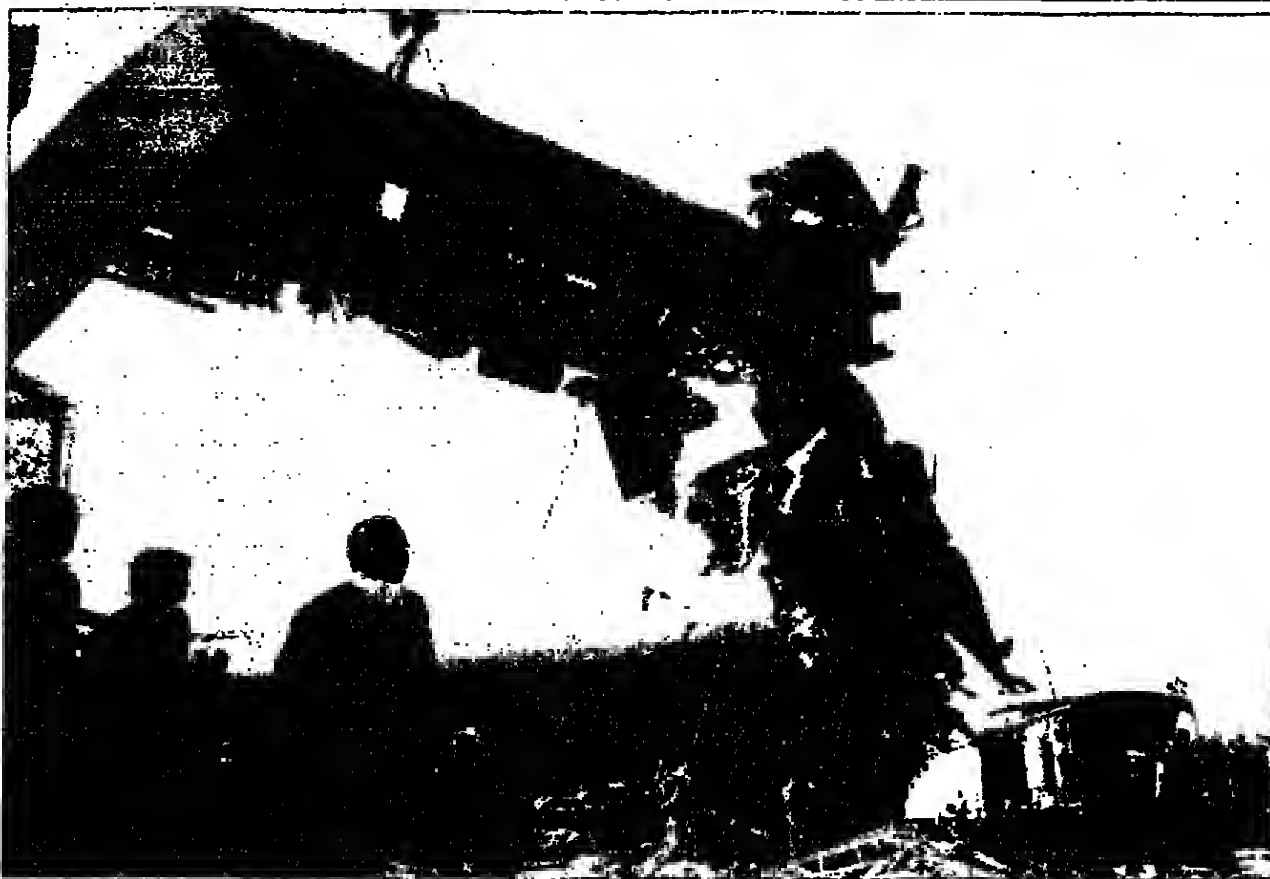
Authorities postponed the repatriation process indefinitely to contain violence after nearly 20 people were injured in the fighting.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) lodged a strong protest with the Bangladesh government over the "forcible repatriation."

Officials Monday said they had already made preliminary contacts with the militants at Nayapara but there was no immediate breakthrough to end the food boycott.

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A crane clears debris of a crashed train in Faridabad town early Monday. At least 12 people died and 75 were injured when a speeding passenger train smashed into a slower-moving one in this industrial town near New Delhi (Reuters photo)

## India train crash kills at least 12, injures 75

**FARIDABAD, India (R) —** At least 12 people died and about 75 were injured early Monday when two passenger trains collided in this industrial town outside New Delhi, officials said.

"We can confirm 12 people died in the accident," M.S. Ahlwar, a deputy superintendent of police, told Reuters at the crash site. "About four or five more seriously injured people may not survive."

A railway police official, Deepa Mehta, had earlier put the death toll at 15. K.K. Gupta, a senior railway manager in charge of rescue operations, said the Karnataka Express, which was running 12 hours late, had overshot a stop signal on a loop line and run into the slower-moving Himsagar Express.

The engine of the Karnataka Express and two car-

riages were badly damaged, and at least eight carriages of the Himsagar Express were derailed in the accident, witnesses said.

Mr. Gupta said several injured passengers had been treated at three nearby hospitals.

Rescuers looking for bodies or survivors were working to cut through the tangled metal of the coaches that were thrown off the tracks by the impact.

I.K. Joseph, a passenger on the Himsagar Express, said, "There was a big bang. I was sleeping on the top berth and I fell down and the lights went off. When I lit a match the coach had overturned and I crawled out of a window."

Revathi Nandan Saigal, who was travelling on the Himsagar Express and was treated for his injuries at the nearby Badshah Khan Hos-

pital, said that he saw the Karnataka Express heading for him as he sat near a window.

"I saw this and did not realise what was happening," Mr. Saigal said. "When I regained consciousness I was in hospital."

S.M. Krishnapilla, an army officer, said he tried to climb out of the wreckage after the accident but realised that he had too many broken bones. "I waited and cried for help,"

Doctors treating the injured said that the death toll was unlikely to rise. "Of the injured treated here, the condition of some is serious but only one more is critical," Dr. S. Sarup of the Badshah Khan Hospital told Reuters.

Monday's collision was the latest in the accident-prone Indian Railways. On Sunday one person died and 28 were

injured when two coaches of a train derailed in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

Latest government figures show 594 people died in 398 accidents in 1995/96 (April-March) compared with 305 deaths in 501 accidents the previous year.

India's railways cover a vast network spread over 62,915 kilometres and in 1995/96 carried 123 million passengers on long-distance journeys. Trains are the cheapest mode of transport in the sprawling country.

In August 1995, at least 350 people were killed in India's worst train accident in Uttar Pradesh state near the town of Ferozabad, 200 kilometres from New Delhi when two trains collided. The accident was blamed on human error.

## Taleban, Afghan opposition trade fire north of Kabul

**KABUL (R) —** Taleban troops and opposition forces exchanged rocket and artillery fire some 120 kilometres north of Kabul Monday morning, eyewitnesses said.

"There was heavy fire coming from both sides, but I couldn't tell if there had been any movement from either side," said one visitor to the frontline.

Taleban fighters at the pass leading out of Kabul were blocking access to the frontline for journalists for the sixth day running.

The sporadic rumble of artillery and rocket fire could be heard in Kabul throughout the morning, but there were no reports of casualties from any of the city's hospitals.

The lines north of Kabul have been stable since Friday after the opposition advanced more than 60 kilometres towards Kabul, sweeping the Taleban before them.

The Taleban are dug in at the same place where they stopped an opposition advance last October.

But analysts in Kabul say there has been a change in the relative strengths of the warring factions since then.

"The Taleban lost a lot of men and equipment in the north and their belief in ultimate victory has been denied," said one analyst.

"But they still control most of the country and their support in the south of the country is still solid. It is still too early to talk of a collapse of the Taleban across the board."

The analyst, who declined to be identified, said the opposition north of Kabul, commanded by veteran guerrilla leader Ahmad Shah Masood, also had weaknesses.

"Masood is suffering from his narrow support base and the lack of a coherent plan among his allies. Even if he could take Kabul on his own, I'm not sure he could hold it," said the analyst.

The result has been a stalemate on the new frontline, with neither side making a decisive move.

The Taleban have tightened up security in Kabul, carrying out house-to-house searches in areas of the city they suspect of harbouring opposition sympathisers.

The human rights group Amnesty International has accused the Taleban of targeting the Tajik and Hazara ethnic minorities, from whom the opposition draws the bulk of its support. Amnesty accused the Taleban of arresting up to 2,000 people and demanding their release.

A spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Kabul said Sunday he believed that the numbers were lower.

"The number of people arrested for reasons linked to the conflict is substantially lower than those recently claimed. The ICRC is aware that many people are brought in for questioning, but most of them are released within 48 hours," said Thomas Gurner of the ICRC Sunday.

Mr. Masood is unlikely to attempt an all-out assault on

Kabul until he has the cooperation of his anti-Taleban allies, analysts said Sunday.

"It is doubtful that Masood will go it alone. More likely he would prefer Kabul to be under pressure from more than just one direction," said one military expert.

Mr. Masood's ethnic Pushtoon allies in eastern Afghanistan have so far been ineffective in making significant gains against the Taleban, and the strategic highway to the Pakistani border remains open.

Southwest of Kabul, Mr. Masood's allies in the Hezbi-Wahdat Shiite militia have not seriously challenged the Muslim militants based in the Wardak provincial capital of Maidan Shahr.

Taleban-run Radio Shariat reported a Saturday attack by Karim Khalili's Wahdat was repulsed on frontlines well to the west of — and clearly no immediate threat — to Maidan Shahr, let alone Kabul.

In addition to Mr. Masood and Mr. Khalili the anti-Taleban alliance, the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UIFSA), has a third main partner, ethnic Uzbek General Abdul Malik.

In May, Gen. Malik mutinied against his own warlord boss Abdul Rashid Dostum and briefly joined the Taleban, who he had allowed into northern Afghanistan unopposed, before turning on them in a dispute over power-sharing.

Gen. Malik has no reported presence near Kabul, but where he faces the Islamic militia in Badghis province, in the far west, the Uzbek commander has yet to turn on the steam.

The lack of military coordination between the three main faction leaders indicates a poorly developed joint strategy, analysts suggested.

This in turn does not augur well for any future UIFSA-dominated Afghan government in Kabul, which must operate on the principle of fair power-sharing in order to be effective, long-lasting and just.

How quickly the bruised Taleban can muster reinforcements may also affect how soon Mr. Masood's allies can flex added military muscle on different Kabul and provincial fronts.

"Meanwhile, if he can withstand any counter-attacks, Mr. Masood can be expected to continue to apply steady military pressure on the capital from the outside," said one foreign analyst.

"Even an internal uprising against the Taleban as rumoured, would be premature without a committed all-out frontal attack against the city," they added.

Analysts recalled that last year Mr. Masood's forces twice pushed the Taleban back to within 10 kilometres of the Khair Khana gates at the northwest of the capital, as they have done now, but each time themselves were repelled.

## Thousands march in pro-ETA protest in Spain

**SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain (R) —** Tens of thousands of Basques took to the streets in the largest demonstration by the ETA guerrillas' political wing since the killing of a politician by separatist rebels earlier this month.

With Spain still seething over the murder of 29-year-old Miguel Angel Blanco, Basque authorities bolstered security at the pro-ETA march and hundreds of police and private security guards were deployed to maintain order.

The demonstration ended peacefully but sporadic violence later broke out after 30 hooded people clashed with police.

Unarmed police, who had kept a low profile during the march earlier in the day, were deployed onto the streets of the old quarter of the northern Spanish city and fired rubber bullets in the air to disperse the attackers, witnesses said.

Some onlookers emerging from bars shouted "assassins" and "get out" as police gathered in groups in the narrow streets wielding guns ready to quell further attacks.

The violence left a sour taste after a peaceful march in which more than 20,000 demonstrators chanted "independence" and "long live the ETA military" along the beachfront in San Sebastian, a stronghold of the radical separatist movement.

Heri Batasuna, ETA's political arm, called the protest in response to anti-ETA rallies held across Spain in the past two weeks that drew an estimated six million people.

The Basque regional government had barred a similar demonstration planned for last Saturday because of fears of a possible violent backlash by people outraged by Blanco's killing.

Special vans used by anti-riot police were stationed at strategic points, and a police helicopter hovered over the city.

## Hun Sen: Pol Pot is still rebel chief

**PHNOM PENH (R) —** Cambodian strongman Hun Sen said Monday that ousted Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot was still in charge of the rebel group and was playing a political game.

Khmer Rouge radio said in a broadcast Saturday that Pol Pot had been condemned and sentenced to life in prison for crimes against the people and the nation.

Mr. Pol Pot was the architect of the Khmer Rouge's "killing fields" rule from 1975-79 during which more than a million Cambodians were killed by execution, torture, disease, starvation or hard labour.

But Mr. Hun Sen told reporters, "it is a political game of the Khmer Rouge. Pol Pot is in Anlong Veng. He is the leader of the Khmer Rouge forces."

He did not elaborate on what kind of political game he thought Mr. Pol Pot was playing.

Nate Thayer, an American reporter who writes for the Far Eastern Economic Review, said Sunday he had seen Mr. Pol Pot in Anlong Veng, the guerrillas' main base in northern Cambodia, Friday — the first time in 18 years a Western reporter has seen the elusive Pol Pot.

Mr. Thayer declined to give details of his trip.

Khmer Rouge radio Mon-

day blasted a parliament session expected to approve the country's Foreign Minister Ung Huot to succeed ousted Prince Norodom Ranariddh as first prime minister.

It likened the session to a play being directed by Mr. Hun Sen.

Mr. Ung Huot's nomination was backed by Mr. Hun Sen while Prince Ranariddh, who left Cambodia before he was ousted, said he has expelled the foreign minister from his royalist party.

The Khmer Rouge guerrilla group has made clear it supports Prince Ranariddh, repeatedly criticising Mr. Hun Sen's July 6 ouster of the prince in its radio broadcasts.

Mr. Hun Sen said Monday that the Khmer Rouge's political leader Khieu Samphan could not control the guerrilla group. "Khieu Samphan cannot control the Khmer Rouge hardliners, so Pol Pot must keep power," he said.

Pol Pot, now almost 70, was last seen by independent witnesses in late 1979, when he gave a news conference on the Thai-Cambodian border.

That was a year after he and his Khmer Rouge government were forced from Phnom Penh by a Vietna-

mese invasion that installed a government led by Hun Sen in Phnom Penh. Over the years there have been a number of rumours that Pol Pot had died or was seriously ill.

Saturday's Khmer Rouge radio broadcast said Pol Pot and his "clique" had been condemned and sentenced to life in prison at a mass rally Friday for crimes against the people and the nation.

The radio first denounced Pol Pot in mid-June, shortly after a bloody split in the secretive Maoist group's top leadership in which defence chief Son Sen and almost a dozen members of his family were slaughtered. The radio blamed Pol Pot for the massacre.

The radio is the guerrillas' main propaganda mouthpiece and has long been known for its exaggerations, but analysts in Phnom Penh said Saturday's condemnation of Mr. Pol Pot fit in with the scant evidence that has emerged to date from the Anlong Veng stronghold in remote northern Cambodia.

Bitter disagreement over how to handle the Khmer Rouge between Cambodia's two copremiers was a key factor leading to this month's bloody takeover by Mr. Hun Sen.

## Sydney police hit Korean crime gangs

**SYDNEY (R) —** Australian police Monday said they had staged successful operations against Korean crime gangs in Sydney and were investigating reports that Korean gangs were involved in loan-sharking at the city's new casino.

The New South Wales (NSW) State Police Commissioner Peter Ryan said police had been investigating reports of Korean crime gangs for some time and had in recent months successfully hit Korean gangs in Sydney's red light

district of Kings Cross.

"The police service is also aware of allegations of illegal conduct in the precincts of the Sydney Harbour Casino and has been working with casino authorities on addressing them," Mr. Ryan said in a statement.

"The issue of alleged illegal activities by criminals of Korean origin in NSW is not a new one. This work is ongoing and it is not appropriate to discuss police operations publicly," Mr. Ryan said.

The newspaper also ran a full page of stories detailing the gangs' terror tactics and victims — mainly Korean tourists or students.

The existence of the gangs has emerged following the bludgeoning deaths of two Korean men outside a restaurant in Kings Cross in January.

## Blair says Charles can wed Camilla — report

**LONDON (R) —** British Prime Minister Tony Blair is ready to give government approval for royal heir Prince Charles to marry his lover Camilla Parker Bowles, the Sun newspaper reported.

The prime minister's blessing will depend on the couple winning the support of the British people and the Church of England, the tabloid said in its Monday editions.

Prince Charles has been taking steps to give Camilla greater public exposure as the woman in his life.

But many Britons blame her for the break-

up of Prince Charles's 15-year marriage to Princess Diana and say they could never accept Camilla, who is also divorced, as the next Queen of England.

The Sun quoted a close friend of Mr. Blair as saying, "his instincts tell him that if Charles and Camilla wish to marry they should be allowed to do so."

"But he would be pretty mindful of any church opposition."

As prime minister, Mr. Blair has sweeping powers to advise Queen Elizabeth over the succession to the throne.

## India 'ready to meet' Pakistani missile threat

**NEW DELHI (AFP) —** India is ready to meet any "challenge" posed by Pakistani missiles, Defence Minister Mukund Singh Yadav said Monday.

"We are fully prepared to meet any challenge," the minister told parliament here. "We have better capabilities."

"All the developments relating to acquisition and deployment of missiles by Pakistan are being constantly monitored."

Mr. Yadav said New Delhi was aware Islamabad was building up its missile capabilities by acquiring new missiles from China and by developing its own missiles with Chinese assistance.

"We will meet our defence requirements, whatever may be the cost," the minister said.

"Funds constraints will not come in the way of meeting Indian defence requirements. There will be no compromise on this count."

The minister spoke some three weeks after India expressed concern over Pakistani press reports that Islamabad had test-fired a medium-range missile capable of hitting New Delhi.

The Nation, an English-language newspaper in Pakistan, had reported that a long-range version of the country's home-made Haaf missile had been successfully tested. It said the mis-

sile's range was 800 kilometres.

Pakistan already has Haaf-I missiles, with a range of 100 kilometres. Haaf-II can hit targets up to 200 kilometres away.

India alleges Pakistan also has an arsenal of M-11 Chinese-made missiles.

Last month the Washington Post said India had deployed its own Prithvi (Earth) surface missiles near the Pakistani border. The report was denied by New Delhi.

India and Pakistan, both of which are "threshold" nuclear powers believed to have the capability of developing nuclear weapons, have fought three wars since their independence from

Britain in 1947.

The two countries have been trying to improve their relations in recent years but decades of mistrust, compounded by their dispute over the divided Himalayan state of Kashmir — continue to dog them.

On Monday, G.A. Charan Reddy, a member of parliament from the Congress (I) Party, asked if Indian defence forces were "adequately equipped to meet the challenge" posed by Pakistani missiles.

Mr. Yadav said even if the range of Pakistani missiles covered the entire country "we are fully competent to counter such moves and give a befitting reply."

## Gujral denies offering talks with Kashmir rebels

**NEW DELHI (AFP) —** Indian Prime Minister Under Kumar Gujral Monday denied offering unconditional talks to Muslim separatist guerrillas in the Hindu-majority state of Kashmir.

Mr. Gujral, under attack from the opposition for reportedly saying he was willing to negotiate with the militants, said his comments had been misreported by the media.

"I never offered unconditional dialogue with the Kashmiri militants," he said.

"I had said the government was ready for talks with our estranged youth only after they lay down their arms. Maybe I was not properly understood," he said.

Mr. Gujral said he was not speaking in Urdu at any public meetings.

He made the statement after Hindu nationalist leader and former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee accused Mr. Gujral of making "contradictory" statements while visiting Kashmir during the weekend.

Mr. Gujral was reported to have said Saturday he was ready for unconditional talks with the militants, who have been waging a separatist campaign in Kashmir since 1989 which has cost more than 20,000 lives.

The unconditional offer appeared to be the first by an Indian prime minister to the separatists in Kashmir.

In 1995, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao gave the go-ahead for talks but said the militants should

first surrender and the talks would be held "within the framework of the Indian constitution," implying the separatists should first accept India's claim over Kashmir. The offer was rejected.

On Sunday, however, Mr. Gujral appeared to back-track by saying he would not talk to the Muslim militants until they gave up their weapons.

The confusion persisted when parliament reconvened Monday.

Mr. Gujral, who has been widely praised for his efforts to establish closer ties with Pakistan since coming to power in April, reiterated India's claim over the whole of Kashmir including the northern third of the

territory held by neighbouring Pakistan.

Accused of being too dovish towards Pakistan by his opponents, Mr. Gujral said there would be no compromise over New Delhi's traditional stand that the whole of Kashmir belonged to India.

"The whole of Kashmir is an integral part of India and will remain so," he said.

India and Pakistan dispute the ownership of Kashmir. India controls the southern two-thirds of the territory.

New Delhi accuses Islamabad of arming and training Muslim militants fighting against Indian rule. Pakistan denies the charge, but says it gives diplomatic backing to the separatists.

His reemergence from relative obscurity has caused observers to wonder what is going on behind the scenes within the Communist Party.

Last week all major dailies carried his commentary on urgent issues ranging from alcoholism to landlessness among farmers.

In his latest article he reminded readers of U.S. atrocities during the war and said the U.S. reneged on its commitment of more than \$3 billion in aid following the end of the war in 1975.

While many capitalist countries have established good commercial relations with Vietnam... since the lifting of the embargo the U.S. has posed many problems to pressure Vietnam in order to serve its self interest," he said.

Mr. Linh was retired as party chief, Vietnam's most powerful position, in 1991 when he was replaced by Do Muoi.

## Vietnam urges more 'equitable' ties with U.S.

**HANOI (AFP) —** Former Vietnam Communist Party chief, Nguyen Van Linh Monday urged his country to seek more "equitable relations" with the U.S. in economic and war-related spheres.

Mr. Linh chided the U.S. for spending millions of dollars on the recovery of remains of soldiers "missing in action" (MIAs) since the Vietnam War while having failed to give a clear response to Vietnamese requests for aid to victims of

agent orange.

In a commentary which appeared in the Saigon Gia-phung newspaper over the weekend Mr. Linh accused the U.S. of bullying Vietnam before and after the lifting of an economic embargo in 1994.

He argued that since then U.S. businesses have brought with them meagre amounts of capital and technology while flooding Vietnam with U.S. consumer goods.

Mr. Linh's article was entitled "international relations

should be more equitable," but only the U.S. was singled out.

"While many capitalist countries have established good commercial relations with Vietnam... since the lifting of the embargo the U.S. has posed many problems to pressure Vietnam in order to serve its self interest," he said.

Mr. Linh was retired as party chief, Vietnam's most powerful position, in 1991 when he was replaced by Do Muoi.



## Jordan Times

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## Shooting the air in joy

**HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS** to the Jordanian national soccer team and to all of our young athletes whose fine performances made this Pan-Arab Games event the most successful in Jordan's history.

However, Sunday's victory celebrations that flowed for hours through the capital give cause to address a very serious issue: the irresponsible use of firearms (including automatic weapons), which, since last Saturday has been the cause of two deaths and twenty reported injuries sustained during the course of Tawjilhi and Arab Games celebrations.

These statistics are obscene. The danger that was posed to both lives and property following the Jordan-Syria match was entirely predictable after Jordan's victory over Kuwait and the ensuing festivities.

Unfortunately, common sense seems to have escaped Sunday's revellers, even after repeated appeals from Public Security Department and the media asking partygoers to leave their arms at home. Is there an excuse for such reckless and life-threatening behaviour, particularly in residential neighbourhoods?

It is also unfortunate that many who would have liked to join in the celebrations, or cheer on from front lawns and balconies were too terrified to do so, and were hence confined to their homes, with no real guarantees of being safe from straying bullets.

Athletic victories, weddings and Tawjilhi scores are all cause for celebration. However, it is disturbing that citizens continue to take up arms to express their joy. The country is after all entering the 21st century. Plain and simple, guns kill.

No one will argue that young athletes are a source of pride to every nation: they represent the true spirit of exemplary behaviour, national unity and honest endeavour towards a common goal. But it is sure that all the medals at the Arab Games would hold no meaning if one Jordanian were to lose his/her life in applauding such victory.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawmi criticised a Ministry of Health decision to allow British meat and milk products to enter the Jordanian market, saying that the ministry is risking the health of the Jordanians because of the mad cow disease that has been proved to have affected British cattle over the past years. Riham Farra said that Jordanian citizens could continue to live frugally, face rising prices and bear the heavy taxes, but would not accept to eat poisoned food products. If the European countries themselves have rejected the British meat and milk products, why should Jordan accept them? It is because the Jordanian government has succumbed to pressure from the British government, asked the writer. We do not need any economic aid from Britain and we do not wish to have good relations with a country that sells us poisoned food, neither do we need Britain to support us at the United Nations, but we need our government not to impose on us meat and milk products that are likely to carry disease to poison our children, she stressed. The writer cited a recent statement by former Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas who said in an article in the press recently that Jordanians have become accustomed to eating food products not perfectly fit for human consumption, but they are not immunised against mad cow disease.

FAHED FANEK, a writer for Al Ra'i, said Monday that Jordan had no choice in 1991 but to enter into the peace process to safeguard its national security and regain its lands and water resources. Having seen Iraq, the largest Arab power, crushed by the U.S.-led coalition, having seen the Palestinians conclude peace with Israel, and having witnessed the Arab World falling to pieces and in total disarray, Jordan saw no reason for not acting in a manner that would protect its interests and restore its rights, said the writer. As to the advantages of the peace treaty with Israel concluded in 1994, he said, Jordan regained its lands and secured an Israeli recognition of its internal borders, thus aborting any Zionist claims that Jordan serves as a substitute homeland for the Palestinians, said the writer. He said through the peace process, which was decided by many pessimists, Jordan is sure to secure additional amounts of water for its growing population's needs. The writer pointed out that as a result of the peace treaty, and contrary to what the pessimists had claimed, Israel has not dominated the Jordanian economy but the accord has helped Jordan to secure sizeable amounts of economic and financial aid from foreign nations.

## The View from Fourth Circle

# Guilt, forgiveness, truth and reconciliation: Learning from the German-Czech declaration

By Rami G. Khouri

BONN, Germany — Being largely uninterested in technological and engineering achievements, and having exhausted my determination to test the major varieties of German pretzels and sausages, I have used my time on a visit here to explore an aspect of modern Germany that you might call "social engineering", and that may be very relevant to others around the world who are struggling to resolve conflicts and achieve forgiveness and reconciliation. The specific issue that strikes me as worth greater appreciation is the recent reconciliation between Germany and the Czech Republic. This could hold valuable lessons for the resolution of equally bitter conflicts, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, because of the common features of mass suffering, expulsions and displacements of millions of people, loss of property and life and a lingering, stubborn insistence on not forgetting the wrongs of the past but rather trying to redress those wrongs and lay the groundwork for a future of mutual respect, cooperation and prosperity.

The German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and Their Future Development was signed in January after 18 months of detailed negotiations.

Along with its exemplary brevity (just three and a half double-spaced typed pages!) the declaration is most striking, I thought, for both sides' formal, explicit admission of responsibility for their hurtful deeds in the past. (The basic facts of the case are that after the 1938 Munich agreement Nazi Germany took control of the Czech border region inhabited by Czech nationals who were of German ethnic origin, causing hundreds of thousands of non-German Czechs to leave that area and move into the Czech heartland; after Germany's defeat in World War II, the Czechs regained the disputed territory along their border with Germany, some one and a half million Germans were evicted en masse, the new situation was formalized by the Potsdam Treaty after WW II, and it remained unchanged and unspoken of during the four decades of the Communist era. Both countries thus have many bitter citizens who were displaced or lost property and who, in many cases, have demanded compensation for their suffering and material losses.)

The declaration explicitly admits the wrongs committed by both sides, stating: "The German side acknowledges Germany's responsibility for its role in a historical development which led to the 1938 Munich Agreement, the flight and forcible expulsion of people from the Czech border area and the forcible breakup and occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic. It regrets the suffering and injustice inflicted upon the Czech people through National Socialist crimes committed by Germans. The German side

pays tribute to the victims of National Socialist tyranny and to those who resisted it.... The Czech side regrets that, by the forcible expulsion and forced resettlement of Sudeten [southern] Germans from the former Czechoslovakia after the [second world] war as well as by the expropriation and deprivation of citizenship, much suffering and injustice was inflicted upon innocent people, also in view of the fact that guilt was attributed collectively. It particularly regrets the excesses which were contrary to elementary humanitarian principles as well as legal norms existing at that time...."

The admission of responsibility and guilt is a critical element in sustainable conflict resolution, for it acknowledges to the other side that the wrongs and the hurt that were administered are not being denied or swept under the carpet. By acknowledging the pain and suffering caused to others, such admissions set the stage for genuine reconciliation.

The German president, Roman Herzog, in a 1994 speech on German relations with its neighbours, said that "What we need is reconciliation and understanding, mutual trust, and good neighbourliness. They will only thrive and grow if our peoples openly face up to the atrocities of their recent history — quite openly and without prejudice, with the courage to accept the whole truth; neither adding nor omitting, neither concealing nor squandering anything; conscious of needing forgiveness, but also being prepared to forgive."

Czech President Vaclav Havel for his part said in a speech during the visit of the German president to Prague in 1990: "The basic prerequisite for a genuine friendship between our nations is truth, a truth that is always expressed, no matter how hard."

The second crucial factor in the German-Czech reconciliation is the act of apology and contrition. Both sides not only admit their wrongs, but express sorrow, regret and apology. This emotional expression rehumanises both the former enemy and oneself, and reestablishes sound human relations based on respect rather than dominance and force.

The third important element is the firm placing of issues from the past firmly in the past, i.e., agreeing that the injustices of the past cannot be completely undone and that they should not burden future cooperation and progress for both people. The declaration states that both sides are "convinced that injustice inflicted in the past cannot be undone but at best alleviated, and that in doing so no new injustice must arise.... Both sides agree that injustice inflicted in the past belongs in the past, and will therefore orient their relations towards the future... each side

remains committed to its legal system and respects the fact that the other side has a different legal position. Both sides therefore declare that they will not burden their relations with political and legal issues which stem from the past."

Such forward-looking maturity and resolve could only occur, I suspect, because of the declaration's earlier clauses expressing mutual responsibility and regret. This process has worked in part because both sides coupled the admission of responsibility and guilt with an agreement to devolve these of current legal claims (which is one reason some, mostly elderly, Sudeten Germans oppose the accord, though the vast majority of Germans accept it).

The fourth element in this dynamic that struck me as significant is its focus on ongoing joint efforts to continue the process of acknowledging rather than hiding historical facts and of working together in different fields in order to continue the mutual healing. Thus the declaration includes provisions to set up a German-Czech Future Fund to finance projects of mutual interest (e.g., youth meetings, care for the elderly, restoration of monuments, promotion of minorities), to continue the work of the German-Czech Commission of Historians, and to set up a German-Czech Discussion Forum to foster dialogue on issues of common concern.

Though the passage of time has been an important element in bringing about this reconciliation in the centre of Europe, German and Czech officials I have spoken with also point out several other important elements. One is "the need to admit your wrongs and to unburden yourself of your guilt for past actions," a Czech official said. Another, according to a German, is the fact that "Germans have learned to be more sensitive and careful with our behaviour vis-a-vis neighbours who fear and watch our actions because of our history and our big size and power relative to the rest of Europe."

Both sides use almost identical words in describing the impact of the declaration, saying it brought them "freedom from the past" and was "like removing a cork from a bottle that liberates previously pent-up sentiments and resources and allows a strong, normal flow of emotions and relations."

There are important lessons about human nature and political reconciliation to be learned from this once dark bit of history for the Middle East and many other regions of the world where the promise of a better future is often tragically held hostage to the enduring bitterness and trauma of the past.

Here is a fresh model of how to deal with such historical obstacles.

## Europe has a major role to play in Asia-Pacific security

By Paul Stores  
and Nicolas Regaud

TOKYO — The sight of British forces departing Hong Kong has doubtless reinforced the general impression that Europe has irrevocably disengaged from the security affairs of the Asia-Pacific region. But the reality is one of growing not diminishing involvement. Important reasons exist, moreover, for Europe to play a much greater role in the future.

Though undeniably modest when compared to America's influence, Europe's contributions to regional security are significant.

The European Union is now a regular participant in the ASEAN Regional Forum, established to promote dialogue and mutual

confidence in East Asia. The EU is also making an active effort to stabilise the Korean Peninsula, first with a pledge of \$90 million to the Korean Energy Development Organisation to help forestall nuclear proliferation and, more recently, with \$69 million in food aid to the North.

European countries have also been heavily involved in the self-defence efforts of regional powers, primarily with arms transfers but also through industrial cooperation, military training programmes and joint exercises. These activities have all increased steadily since the end of the cold war.

During the 1990s, Britain and France have vigorously pursued defence cooperation agreements with countries throughout East Asia. Both, along with Germany, have also begun holding regular

security dialogues with Japan. France, moreover, has recently launched an independent initiative to engage China on a variety of security issues.

In general, however, Europe's involvement in Asia-Pacific security is a patchwork effort pursued without overarching design or higher coordination. This deficiency should be redressed for two fundamental reasons.

First, Europe's growing economic stake in the Asia-Pacific region demands it. Over a quarter of the EU's external trade — nearly \$180 billion in 1995 — is with East Asia. EU members have also made substantial investments in the region that are now valued at around \$75 billion. While lower than U.S. levels, the difference is not so significant and cer-

tainly does not justify the much lower European security role.

Second, European countries may be drawn into a major regional crisis whether they like it or not. This is particularly true for Britain and France in their capacity as permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. The United States is also likely to request the support of its principal allies should it become militarily engaged, something that would be difficult to duck without alienating their primary security guarantor.

And lest they be overlooked, both Britain and France have made important — albeit non-binding — commitments to the security of key countries in the region, notably South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei. Some of these agree-

ments are remnants of the cold war, other vestiges of the colonial era. Regardless, they remain in effect and could be invoked in the future.

In short, Europe's direct interest in promoting peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region necessitates a more active and coherent policy of engagement.

Clearly this is easier said than done. Europe's progress towards a common foreign and security policy lags well behind its aspirations. The twin goals of deeper European integration and enlargement have also become all-consuming priorities and thus leave little enthusiasm, to say nothing of additional resources, for bold new initiatives beyond Europe.

The trick, therefore, is to do more with similar levels of effort. Pulling it off entails better coordination and collaboration among the most interested states.

Establish a high-level contact group for Asia-Pacific. This would exchange assessments, discuss initiatives and generally build consensus on such matters as responding to a Korean crisis, engaging China, defusing conflict over Taiwan and defining a common arms sales policy.

Make European participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum more effective. The EU's current weak representation needs to be reformulated and room found for British and French membership, if only on a rotating basis.

Bolster Europe's military options and contingency planning. Britain and France now deploy modest forces at irregular intervals to the region. By combining their assets for joint exercises, a more meaningful presence would be possible without additional cost. Forces from other European countries could join them if desired.

Develop a coordinated dialogue with Japan, China and the United States on Asia-Pacific security. By building on existing ties, Europe can play a useful moderating role in fostering a stable trilateral relationship among these three powers, a process that is absolutely critical to the equilibrium of the region.

Europe's colonial presence in East Asia is indeed nearly over — Macau's reversion in 1999 will end it finally — but the stakes are too high and the world too small for it to stay out of the security affairs of the region.

Paul Stores is a senior research fellow and Nicolas Regaud is a visiting research fellow at the Japan Institute of International Affairs in Tokyo. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

## Victim reveals Israel's regime of torture

By Patrick Cockburn

JERUSALEM — For 47 days Omar Ghanimat was tortured in an Israeli prison, his open wounds allowed to fester, while the Israeli press denounced him as "a ticking bomb," a man whose mistreatment was justified because he knew about forthcoming attacks on civilian targets.

This week Mr. Ghanimat, 45, with seven children, was sentenced to only three months in prison, a tacit admission by the prosecutor that he had committed no serious offence.

Human rights lawyers say his case proves that Palestinian prisoners are routinely tortured by the Israeli security forces and not only when they are suspected of knowing of an attack.

"It was the worst case of torture I have seen in Israel," says Allegra Pacheco, Mr. Ghanimat's lawyer, who saw him in the Russian compound prison in Jerusalem after eight weeks of continuous interrogation.

"His hands and legs had swelled to bubbles because there were tight handcuffs on both. There were gashes on his arms and some of them were pussy and bleed-

ing," Mr. Ghanimat was arrested in the village of Tzurif, north of Hebron, on April 10 after Israeli security (Shin Bet) rounded up a cell of Izzedeen Kassam, the military arm of the militant Islamic group Hamas.

The cell was responsible for planting a bomb in a case in Tel Aviv in which three women were killed. Mr. Ghanimat had the same last name as the bomber, but was not related to him (though the Israeli press reported that he was his brother).

Israeli security is usually careful to use methods of torture which do not use marks.

In Mr. Ghanimat's case they were less inhibited. Ms. Pacheco, who works for LAW, a Palestinian human rights group, says this may have been because he did not at first have a lawyer.

Always tightly handcuffed, so blood could not reach his hands, a dirty sack placed over his head and deprived of sleep for long periods, he says he was kicked and beaten until he could not walk.

In a painfully written affidavit on May 27, the first time he saw his lawyer, Mr. Ghanimat wrote how one of his interrogators called "Captain Tariq" sat "on a small chair, placed it on my

chest... and jumped from the chair onto my chest causing me severe pain." Another, called "the major," pulled me "from under the chair, which caused injuries to my legs."

Although he screamed with pain continually and was bleeding, a prison doctor who saw him prescribed only the equivalent of Vicks for his chest.

During his interrogation, Mr. Ghanimat was continually asked to confess to being a member of Izzedeen Kassam. Desperate to end the torture he admitted that in 1994 an Israeli had come to Tzurif with a stolen car in which he and a friend had found a gun. They hid it and the friend had later handed over the weapon to Palestinian security.

His interrogators seemed uninterested in this. Mr. Ghanimat says one of them said him: "Torture is like the ways of the sea — that which is to come is more severe than that which has passed."

Shocked by what he had seen, Ms. Pacheco appealed to the Israeli High Court under its president Aharon Barak to ask for a court order to stop the torture. The court allowed Mr. Ghanimat to come to court and show his wounds. Photographers were

allowed to photograph them. At first Mr. Ghanimat would not speak in front of Shin Bet interrogators, saying: "I can't. They'll kill me when we get back to prison." Mr. Barak then told the Shin Bet officers to leave the court.

After Mr. Ghanimat described what had happened the state attorney said that "at this stage" no more physical pressure would be placed on him. He returned to the Russian compound where the Shin Bet had him write out a confession about the gun in the stolen car, a technical offence for which he has just received three months in prison. He is to be released on July 9.

In May the U.N. Committee against Torture decided that Israel, by permitting its security forces to use "moderate physical pressure" against prisoners, legalises torture.

It singled out seven methods of interrogation, such as the use of cold air to chill prisoners, sleep deprivation, sacks over the head, shackling in painful positions and violent shaking (which has the same effect as a whiplash injury in a car crash) as breaching the U.N. Convention against Torture.

The Independent

## LETTERS

### No discrimination here

To the Editor:

IN REFERENCE to Rima Chadirchi's letter "Sports is not politics" (Jordan Times, July 27, 1997), in which she stated that she could not participate as a member of the Jordanian squash team in the Pan-Arab Games because she holds an Iraqi passport, we would like to state the following:

The Lebanese embassy in Amman has duly granted visas to all members of the official Jordanian sports team participating in the eighth Pan-Arab Games held in Beirut, Jordanians and non-Jordanians, including Iraqi nationals, in adherence to the list provided by the Jordan Olympic Committee.

We hope that this clarification will set the record straight.

Dr. William Habib,  
Ambassador of Lebanon,  
Amman.



## Features Fallen

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## Fallen Falcon

Omar Bilal died on July 26, his life prematurely taken when his plane crashed during an air show in Belgium. A top pilot who was planning to win the World Aerobatics Championship for Jordan, Capt. Bilal was dedicated to his work and country. An interview conducted with him last November by Mariana Al Far sheds more light on the man, the pilot and his dreams that were cut short by an untimely death.

In 1985 Omar Bilal joined the Royal Jordanian Air Force Academy at age 17. It was a dream come true. Finally he was old enough to be in one of the planes that his uncle used to show him since Omar was a 10-year-old boy.

In 1988, he graduated as a fighter pilot. In 1992, he was chosen to be part of Jordan's precision flying team, the Royal Falcons.

Military flying teams such as the Royal Falcons or the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds regularly fly in air shows which are demonstrations of pilots' abilities and a way to show off military aircraft. The manoeuvres in these demonstrations are standard for any trained pilot. The teams dazzle spectators by flying these manoeuvres in precise formation.

Capt. Bilal is both a member of the Jordanian Royal Falcons and an award-winning solo aerobatics competitor. His awards in aerobatics competitions include one at an international championship in Belgium in 1994, best solo display pilot in England's Big Thunder Air Show and best aerobatics pilot in Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg in 1995. He also won a bronze medal in the British National Aerobatics Championship in 1995, and in

1996, best pilot in Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg again. His most recent award came last September when he came first in the four-minute freestyle event flying a German-made plane at the British National Aerobatics Championship.

He received a hero's welcome when he returned home from his most recent triumph in Britain.

**QUESTION:** What made you switch from a fighter pilot to an aerobatics pilot?

**ANSWER:** To be a fighter pilot is really nice. It is quite different than flying aerobatics. The best thing about it is the speed. You are flying at the speed of sound. It is a great feeling. But as a fighter pilot there is no competition. I was lucky to be assigned to join the Royal Jordanian Falcons which is the national team of Jordan. It was established in 1967 upon the initiative of His Majesty King Hussein in order to represent Jordan internationally in flying and accuracy, also as a means of having better understanding with peoples in the world and to promote Jordan.

**Q:** How big is your team?

**A:** We are 10: five pilots and five maintenance staff. We have a very big hangar and we are highly equipped. We can handle anything. To a certain extent we are self-sufficient.

The standards of Royal Falcons are very high. Since 1994 we have started doing solo competitions. Before that we used to do only air displays or airshows, meaning no judges, no scores.

**Q:** Can you tell more about the air shows and working in the team?

**A:** We fly four airplanes as a formation. We fly very close to each other, maybe

one-and-a-half metres apart. It is very dangerous and takes lots of training. We learn to trust each other because if one of us makes a mistake, it is fatal for all. We fly very close to each other and we do many complicated and dangerous manoeuvres.

**Q:** You must train for long hours.

**A:** Actually it depends, but in seven months' time the team should be ready and flying all the manoeuvres. We train for the formation shows about two hours a day. That's two trips, two sorties a day.

**Q:** And what is your flying position?

**A:** I fly in the position called "the slot", or number four. The leader is in the front. There are right and left wing and me in the slot. I am the only guy who sees the other three airplanes while they are unable to see me.

**Q:** How strong is the bond between team members?

**A:** We are together most of the time. There is a kind of challenge game between the man who lies in the right wing and the man who flies in the left wing. If we want to reach perfection in some manoeuvres it takes a lot of practice and training to establish it. Sometimes we do a manoeuvre and we find ourselves in the wrong position. For example, I used to fly in the left wing and we were doing a 360-degree change horizontally and I found myself in the right wing and the right wing found himself in the left wing. It was strange and at that time we could not figure out what happened. But it seems that while manoeuvring at the inverted position we switched positions. It was funny because it was not very safe, but it just happened!

**Q:** How much training does it take to win championships?

**A:** In preparation for a contest I often fly five times a day. It takes a lot of physical effort.

**Q:** Do you experience fear sometimes?

**A:** There was a time when my level of experience was relatively low. You know you have the ability, but it is a bit dangerous when you are trying to do the things you learned. You feel the rush of adrenaline. You do a manoeuvre while you are on a high level and you try to recover at an intermediate height and the airplane



Pilot Omar Bilal (centre) poses with his engineer prior to one of his flights

refuses to recover. You are still in the middle of this manoeuvre. Finally, you recover on very low altitude. This is scary because you hit the right commands, and you see no change in what's happening. You are still inside. There is no response. Later on you find out that you made a small, silly mistake. This comes with experience.

Now, I am extra cautious when I fly. Nowadays, there are no fears or anxiety. I am simply enjoying what I am doing. I feel that the plane is just like my leg or my hand. It is part of me.

**Q:** What does your plane represent for you?

**A:** I always kiss my airplane before flying. I kiss the wing just like I would kiss my baby. It is a great feeling. I don't know how to express it. When you fly an airplane and you win, you know that this airplane, this baby, can get you almost anything. I've got lots of fans in Europe and it is all because of my baby.

**Q:** People have a romantic idea of pilots and many movies showcase pilots. How close are they to the real thing?

**A:** The movies show what we are all about, but the need to entertain overshadows reality. In "Top Gun", for example, the way they did the close contact in the air — we call it a dogfight — is almost unbelievable. They used lots of special effects. But the way they show pilots on the ground is true to life: after a mission, you take a shower, put on a T-shirt on and have a date with a gorgeous woman!

**Q:** Who is your ideal pilot? Where are you heading?

**A:** I used to say, I want to be like this person, but now it's different. I am very close to the world aerobatics championship title, so I think that if I work a little bit I'll win. I was supposed to participate in August in the World Aerobatics Championship in Oklahoma City, Okla., but at the last minute I had to cancel. It is a title that every pilot dreams of getting. I am almost there. So my future plans: world championship for Jordan.

King Hussein is very keen on flying, and he always gives me the feeling that someone is supporting me and I should keep going on.

## New health scourge emerges from African rainforest

By Matthew Bunce  
Reuter

ABIDJAN — A flesh-rotting germ lurking in the soil of Africa has been stirred up by destruction of the tropical forests and is attacking people as never before, doctors say. Buruli, a virulent African version of a flesh-eating bacterium that surfaced in western hospitals in the 1990s, strips away skin by destroying blood vessels with toxins to expose huge areas of gangrenous flesh.

"Now that we are getting rid of leprosy, we have a new leprosy bug for the third millennium," says Ivory Coast's World Health Organisation (WHO) representative, Dr. Emmanuel Eben-Moussi.

"It was probably already there but environmental disaster has woken it up," he told Reuters after taking WHO Director Hiroshi Nakajima on a June fact-finding tour of clinics.

The disease, a cousin of tuberculosis and leprosy, was named after Uganda's Buruli region in 1960 by British researchers.

The only way to treat it is to excise the rotting parts surgically.

Tell-tale swellings turn into ulcers, then gaping yellow-and-black sores ringed with dead flesh, oozing a painless but foul-smelling discharge. Victims often die from multiple infections, exhaustion and blood poisoning.

"Normally, it does not attack man. But man has modified the environment," says Dr. Bouzid Samir Anor, an epidemiologist researching buruli at Ivory Coast's branch of the Paris-based Pasteur Institute. "Now it is in an

epidemic phase. In four years, the number of affected people doubled."

**"Normally, it does not attack man. But man has modified the environment. Now it is in an epidemic phase. In four years, the number of affected people doubled."**

The disease first surfaced in humans in 1948 in Australia, where koala bears have also been reported infected.

The germ, known to scientists as mycobacterium ulcerans, has been identified across Africa's rainforests from Uganda to Ivory Coast since 1950, when an American went down with the disease in the then Belgian Congo. It has also been found in Ghana and Benin, but research is patchy and uncoordinated.

It lives in hot and humid rainforest soil that thrives near dams, irrigation ditches and cleared forest. In some villages it has killed 13 per cent of victims, doctors say.

### Total cases unknown

The total number of cases is unknown but European and African researchers want buruli put on who's top category for tropical disease research funding, alongside malaria, sleeping sickness, yellow fever and other African scourges.

In Ivory Coast alone, where a world symposium on Buruli is planned for February 1998, the bug has infected 6,000 people — from just two when it began to emerge 15 years ago following a spate of post-independen-

dence dam-building and logging. Donors say forest cover

has been cut, often illegally, to 3.9 million hectares from 12 million before independence from France in 1960. Ivory Coast is the world's main cocoa grower. Buruli tends to attack women working fields around villages, along with their young children, who play in soil nearby.

"For many, treatment after a certain stage means amputation," says Professor Mireille Dosso, chief bacteriologist at Abidjan's Pasteur Institute. "Skin becomes unstuck, you can even lift chunks off without people feeling it." Traditional African cures, she says, only "make matters worse".

Villagers sometimes call buruli "rotten manioc" — after a staple food in Ivory Coast. They often blame symptoms on sorcery, curses and black magic.

Doctors believe people become infected when scratched by a sharp plant or through a scrape or cut on the skin.

In 1995, there were 4,000 recorded cases. Some Pasteur Institute researchers put the number in 1997 at 6,000 or higher.

Rural volunteers and Canadian and Italian nuns run basic centres similar to leper colonies pioneered by the missionary

Albert Schweitzer in Africa in the early 1900s, but are overwhelmed with cases as funds dry up.

Some sufferers are sent to traditional leper colonies.

"The lepers say they prefer leprosy when they see this," says Jean Marie-Kanga, chief dermatologist at Abidjan's University Hospital.

He said the antibiotic rifampicin used in leprosy treatment killed the bacteria in test tubes.

"There is no treatment for humans even though it works in vitro," he said at his laboratory, where U.S.-based centres for disease control researchers are lending a hand.

Ivory Coast's first known buruli victim caught it playing by a lake in 1978. She survived after 16 months of surgery in her native France.


African children are particularly vulnerable, making up three-quarters of cases. A third drop out of school — crippled for life and unable to work and help their families.

Kouame Valerie, 16, comes from Zonkougne, a village by a dam near Ivory Coast's inland capital Yamoussoukro.

She was taken to hospital three months ago. Her symptoms are bulbous swellings around the eyes. "My eyes were hurting," she recalls. "There is a lot of water near and other people in my village have got it as well."

Professor Dosso, surrounded by researchers in protection suits colour-coded for each of seven laboratories trying to isolate different parts of the bug, says a few people do get better spontaneously. For most, the disease just spreads.


**Jordan Times, Tel. 699634, 684311**



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5th circle : Nowara Pharmacy</li> <li>behind the Mill bakery. Tel. 857177</li> <li>Tyche Hotel. Tel. 661114</li> <li>Grand Palace Hotel</li> <li>Shmeisani : Haya Cultural Center.</li> <li>Nazal Area: Ja'bari Stores.</li> <li>Joti- Abdali. Tel. 664146</li> <li>Green Meadows for Tourism.</li> <li>Wasfi Al-Tal Str. Tel. 698184</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>McDonalds, A. Goshah st.</li> <li>859802 Meeting point to Petra buses</li> <li>Marj Al Hamam: Big Bear Stores Tel: 716676</li> <li>2nd circle. Hani Supermarket Tel. 658619</li> <li>Music Box, 7th circle. Tel. 815745</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fuheis : Al-Housh Resi. Tel: 729152</li> <li>Irbid : Al-Aniqua Boutique. Tel : 277909</li> <li>Zarka: Nakhleh for Travel &amp; Tourism. Tel. 901910</li> <li>Madaba: Mirag for Travel &amp; Tourism</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|



## Oil, gas projects steer Qatar to prosperity

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Qatar is marching firmly towards economic prosperity as major oil and gas projects heal its transitory economic hardships and turn it again into a capital exporter, experts say.

Although oilfield development projects will hardly change its position as a minor crude supplier, they will fetch it more hard currency as the tiny Gulf country has proven inability to control its OPEC-decreed oil share.

But plans to turn its mammoth underground gas wealth into marketable liquid will be its real windfall as exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) will generate even more cash than its entire oil sales, the experts say.

Qatar, one of the tiniest countries, aims to become the top LNG producer in the world with an eventual production of nearly 20 million tonnes per year.

As all the output will be exported to Japan and other consumers, at least \$5 billion in extra income will find their way into its coffers every year. That is far more than the earnings generated by crude exports.

"The economy is expected to continue to perform well in the next few years," said Mohammad Moabi, senior economist at the Qatar National Bank.

"By the turn of the century, most of the projects currently under implementation in gas, oil, petrochemicals, steel and other industries should be fully operational," he wrote in the London-based Arab Banker magazine.

"As the majority of these projects are export-oriented, Qatar should again be a capital surplus nation by the year 2001," he predicted.

Qatar's economy has been jolted by low oil prices, growing debt and poor foreign capital inflows because of the absence of clear investment laws and restrictions on ownership by non-nationals.

Economic woes, which followed a boom in the early 1980s, were cited by the present emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, as a reason for overthrowing his father Sheikh Khalifa in a bloodless palace coup in 1995.

Qatar's debt has swollen over the past few years as it

strived to finance a persistent budget deficit and meet growing development needs.

The debt grew sharply in the last two years as the government was forced to borrow to fund multi-billion-dollar LNG projects.

According to the Bahraini-based Arab Banking Corporation (ABC), Qatar's total debt soared to around \$4.54 billion in 1996 from \$2.75 billion in 1995.

Its current account, a key indicator of healthy economy, continued to record a deficit, which stood at \$366 million in 1996.

Although the economy surged by around eight per cent last year, this was mainly due to a sharp rise in oil prices, economists said.

"These are momentary problems caused mainly by weak oil prices and lack of investment," said Ihsan Abu Huleika, a prominent Saudi economic expert.

"But the economy will start picking up soon and it is forecast to boom in the next years. This is natural for a small country with such a huge gas wealth, an increase in foreign capital and a better investment climate," he added.

Qatar, with a population of only 600,000, is the third biggest gas reservoir in the world after Russia and Iran. Official and independent estimates put its reserves of natural gas, mostly in the giant North Field, at more than eight trillion cubic metres (266.6 trillion cubic feet).

It has already started exporting LNG to Japan and supplies are set to pick up as the projects get into full swing. The Qatari government and its foreign partners have already secured supply contracts for most of the production.

Experts said LNG sales would not only widen Qatar's economy, but will also guard it against oil price fluctuations, redress its balance of payments and sharply boost its per capita income, already one of the highest in the world.

"You will see a general upswing without sharp fluctuations in the economy," an expert said. "As you know, LNG, unlike oil, is sold on a long-term basis and prices remain stable as per the agreement."

## The Securities Law of 1997

Following is a summary of how the stock market will be reorganised under the new Securities Law which was ratified by a Royal Decree and was published in the Official Gazette on May 15. On Sunday, the Cabinet appointed Central Bank Deputy Governor Michel Marto to head the Security Exchange Commission.

By Leila Irshaidat  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — This new law forms part of the package of new economic and legislative reforms aiming at establishing a sound and sophisticated capital market in Jordan.

Under the new securities law, four independent entities would be created: An independent Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), a privately-run bourse (Amman Bourse), a depository and transfer centre, and a society for accredited financial professionals.

1. The Securities Commission:

The Commission is designed to provide the appropriate environment to achieve sound dealing in securities, regulate and monitor both the securities and capital markets in Jordan. In addition, the Commission aims at protecting holders of securities, investors, and the public in general from fraud and deceit.

Moreover, the Commission shall have a board comprising of five members, including the chairman and deputy chairman, and enjoying administrative and financial autonomy. The board shall report to the prime minister.

2. The Amman Bourse:

The Amman Bourse is a private-run stock exchange and shall be the only agency authorised to operate as a formal market for trading securities in Jordan. The Amman Bourse is a non-profit organisation, managed by a board of directors and an executive manager. Its membership shall consist of financial brokers licensed by the Commission to perform brokerage activities.

3. The Securities Deposit Centre:

The Securities Deposit Centre shall be established for the deposit and transfer of ownership of securities traded in the Amman Bourse. The centre shall also handle the settlement of the prices of traded securities among the brokers through entries records, and shall be the only agency authorised to carry out such activities in Jordan. Additionally, the centre is a non-profit organisation and

shall be the safe keeper of ownership of securities listed in the Amman Bourse. It will be managed by a board of directors and an executive manager.

4. Certified Financial Professionals Association:  
The Financial Professionals Association includes certified financial professionals licensed by the Commission to perform any of the following activities:

- Investment trusteeship.
- Investment management.
- Financial consultations.
- Financial brokerage.
- Depository services.
- Management of primary issues.

The certified financial professionals can only perform the above mentioned activities through financial services companies licensed by the Commission to perform such activities.

Moreover, they must abide by the "Code and Standards of Professional Conduct" that will be issued for this purpose and which is set to emphasise that these financial professionals should work with honesty and devotedly in the interest of their clients and in a manner that will maximise the clients interests and help them achieving their investment objectives without any kind of discrimination or preferential treatment and without charging them exaggerated commissions and fees.

The Code also requests that the certified financial professional should refrain from guaranteeing or promising their clients specified profits, and should not indulge in any act of fraud or deceit against their clients.

The new Securities Law taps other significant issues related to the securities industry such as the investment funds and investment companies, disclosure, and violations and penalties from guaranteeing or promising their clients specified profits, and should not indulge in any act of fraud or deceit against their clients.

The new Securities Law taps other significant issues related to the securities industry such as the investment funds and investment companies, disclosure, and violations and penalties.

REUTERS

REUTERS

### The Business of Information

| Major Currencies & Cross Rates |        |        |        |        |         |        |         |         |         |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Currency                       | USD    | DEM    | GBP    | CHF    | JPY     | CAD    | ITL     | ESP     | SEK     |
| US Dollar                      | 1.0000 | 1.8451 | 0.8124 | 1.5185 | 117.59  | 1.3864 | 1794.00 | 2.0784  | 6.2170  |
| DE Mark                        | 0.5420 | 1.0000 | 0.3317 | 0.8225 | 63.76   | 0.7514 | 972.41  | 1.1258  | 3.3706  |
| GB Sterling                    | 1.6330 | 3.0146 | 1.0000 | 2.4797 | 192.02  | 2.2640 | 2930.50 | 3.3891  | 10.1555 |
| CH Franc                       | 0.6585 | 1.2144 | 0.4030 | 1.0000 | 77.43   | 0.9129 | 1161.82 | 136.90  | 4.0940  |
| JP Yen                         | 0.0085 | 1.5675 | 0.5202 | 1.2905 | 1.0000  | 1.1785 | 15.25   | 176.59  | 5.2852  |
| CA Dollar                      | 0.7213 | 1.3279 | 0.4346 | 1.0950 | 1.18    | 1.0000 | 1290.72 | 1.4958  | 4.4753  |
| IT Lira                        | 0.0006 | 1.0282 | 0.3411 | 0.8846 | 1528.12 | 0.7722 | 1.0000  | 11.58   | 3.4640  |
| NL Guilder                     | 0.4811 | 0.872  | 0.2945 | 0.7306 | 56.55   | 0.6571 | 863.12  | 1.0000  | 2.9816  |
| FR Franc                       | 0.1608 | 0.2985 | 0.0984 | 0.2442 | 10.89   | 0.2229 | 33.41   | 33.8100 | 1.0000  |

| Middle-East Currencies |        |        |         |        |        |        |        |         |        |
|------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Currency               | USD    | JOD    | SAR     | BAH    | QAT    | KUW    | AED    | LEB     | EGP    |
| US Dollar              | 1.0000 | 0.7080 | 3.7503  | 0.3770 | 3.6397 | 0.3043 | 3.6729 | 1539.00 | 3.3895 |
| Jordan Dinar           | 1.4124 | 1.0000 | 5.2970  | 0.5325 | 5.1408 | 0.4298 | 5.1677 | 2173.73 | 4.7674 |
| Saudi Riyal            | 0.2666 | 0.1888 | 1.0000  | 0.1005 | 0.97   | 0.8811 | 0.98   | 410.37  | 0.9038 |
| Bahrain Dinar          | 2.65   | 1.8780 | 3.9477  | 1.0000 | 8.65   | 0.8071 | 8.74   | 4082.23 | 8.9906 |
| Qatar Dinar            | 0.2747 | 0.1945 | 1.0304  | 1.0304 | 1.0000 | 0.8036 | 1.01   | 422.84  | 0.9312 |
| Kuwait Dinar           | 3.2865 | 2.3259 | 12.3256 | 1.2390 | 11.96  | 1.0000 | 12.07  | 6058.01 | 0.9312 |
| Emirates Dinar         | 0.2723 | 0.1928 | 1.0211  | 1.0128 | 0.9910 | 0.8028 | 1.00   | 419.01  | 0.9228 |
| Lebanese/1000          | 0.65   | 0.4600 | 2.4368  | 0.2450 | 2.3650 | 0.1977 | 2.3885 | 1.0000  | 2.2624 |
| Egyptian               | 0.2950 | 0.2089 | 1.1065  | 0.1112 | 1.6738 | 0.0898 | 1.8838 | 464.05  | 1.0000 |

| Energy |        | USD    | DEM | GBP | CHF | JPY |
|--------|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Oil    | Last   | review |     |     |     |     |
| Brent  | 10.22  | 10.11  |     |     |     |     |
| WTI    | 10.50  | 10.44  |     |     |     |     |
| Bonny  | 10.22  | 10.11  |     |     |     |     |
| Dubai  | 17.78  | 17.13  |     |     |     |     |
| UL Gas | 196.00 | 196.00 |     |     |     |     |

| Mid-East Currencies |        |         |         |         |         |  |
|---------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| Currency            | USD    | DEM     | GBP     | CHF     | JPY     |  |
| SA Riyal            | 0.2666 | 0.4920  | 0.16329 | 0.40496 | 31.3688 |  |
| AE Dirham           | 0.2723 | 0.50234 | 0.16673 | 0.4135  | 32.0287 |  |
| KW Dinar            | 3.2868 | 0.50594 | 2.00965 | 4.98504 | 38.1    |  |
| BH Dinar            | 0.3770 | 0.49478 | 1.62443 | 4.02901 | 31.2612 |  |
| CY Pound            | 1.8444 | 3.4013  | 1.1285  | 2.8003  | 216.895 |  |

| Metal Prices    |       | USD   | DEM | GBP | CHF | JPY |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Gold (oz's)     | 327.2 | 327.7 |     |     |     |     |
| Silver (oz's)   | 4.37  | 4.38  |     |     |     |     |
| Platinum (oz's) | 430   | 433   |     |     |     |     |
| AL (3 Months)   | 1888  | 1892  |     |     |     |     |
| CU (3 Months)   | 2366  | 2370  |     |     |     |     |
| Zinc (3 Months) | 1671  | 1674  |     |     |     |     |
| Lead (3 Months) | 647   | 648   |     |     |     |     |
| NI (3 Months)   | 7350  | 7355  |     |     |     |     |

| Currency Deposit Rates (Bid) |       | USD   | DEM   | GBP   | CHF   | JPY   |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Period                       | Month | Month | Month | Month | Month | Month |
| USD                          | 5.54  | 5.57  | 5.58  | 5.51  | 5.90  |       |
| GBP                          | 6.62  | 7.00  | 7.15  | 7.25  | 7.31  |       |
| JPY                          | 0.41  | 0.46  | 0.48  | 0.58  | 0.55  |       |
| DEM                          | 3.09  | 3.12  | 3.18  | 3.25  | 3.39  |       |
| FRF                          | 3.25  | 3.28  | 3.39  | 3.47  | 3.56  |       |
| CHF                          | 1.40  | 1.55  | 1.61  | 1.68  | 1.88  |       |
| ITL                          | 8.83  | 6.78  | 6.88  | 6.51  | 6.40  |       |

| Main Equity Indices |            | Value    | Chng   | % Chng | High    | Low     | P/C     |
|---------------------|------------|----------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Bourse              | Index      | Value    | Chng   | % Chng | High    | Low     | P/C     |
| New York            | DOW JONES  | 9117.39  | 3.05   | 0.03   | 9152.46 | 9108.33 | 9113.44 |
| New York            | S&P 500    | 939.18   | 0.39   | 0.04   | 942.07  | 938.88  | 938.79  |
| London              | FT-SE 100  | 4864.1   | 12.6   | 0.26   | 4868.3  | 4835.3  | 4851.5  |
| Tokyo               | NIKKEI 225 | 20575.26 | 185.72 | 0.91   | 20600.7 | 20420.2 | 20589.5 |
| Paris               | CAC 40     | 3022.2   | -3.74  | -0.12  | 3044.24 | 3017.91 | 3025.94 |
| Frankfurt           | DAX        | 4371.16  | 53.52  | 1.24   | 4379.88 | 4353.35 | 4371.64 |

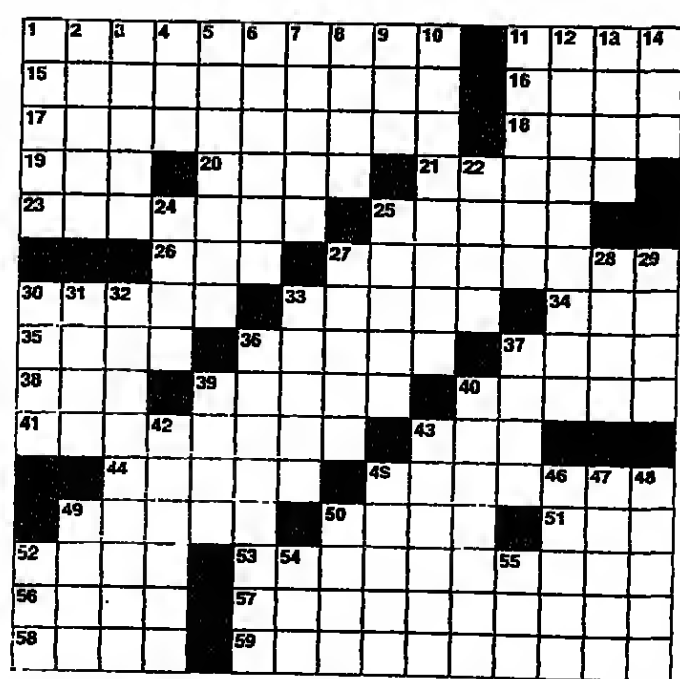
| Energy           |        | Last     | Delivery |
|------------------|--------|----------|----------|
| Commodity        | Last   | Delivery |          |
| Coffee (c/b's)   | 189.83 | Spot     |          |
| Cocoa (\$/ton)   | 1829   | Spot     |          |
| Sugar (\$/ton)   | 342.5  | Spot     |          |
| Wheat (\$/ton)   | 143    | Spot     |          |
| Soya (c/b's)     | 21.42  | Spot     |          |
| Tea (stg/kg)     | 137    | Spot     |          |
| Barley (\$/bush) | 0      | Spot     |          |
| Rice (\$/ton)    | 480    | Spot     |          |

| JOD Cross Rates |        | Buy    | Sell |
|-----------------|--------|--------|------|
| Currency        | Buy    | Sell   |      |
| US Dollar       | 0.708  | 0.710  |      |
| GB Sterling     | 1.7752 | 1.7811 |      |
| DE Mark         | 0.3837 | 0.3856 |      |
| CH Franc        | 0.465  | 0.4673 |      |
| FR Franc        | 0.1139 | 0.1145 |      |
| JP Yen          | 0.6038 | 0.6069 |      |
| NL Guilder      | 0.3406 | 0.3423 |      |
| IT Lira         | 0.3942 | 0.3962 |      |

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

### THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS  
1 Pioneer wagons  
11 Arise  
15 Self free  
16 Deli fare  
17 Set boundaries  
18 Moslem priest  
19 Mature  
20 Where Ada and Enid are: abbr.  
21 Expert  
23 Interweaves  
25 Long scari  
26 — Faithful  
27 Kids  
30 What paint comes in?  
33 Valiant  
34 —, amas, amat  
35 Style magazine  
36 Get ready, as a pump  
37 Air, pref.  
38 Zero  
39 Set up, as a patsy  
40 Gather  
41 — for comfort  
43 Preserves  
44 "In a name?"  
45 Celestial beings  
49 City on the Red River  
50 "— be in England —"  
51 Decay  
52 Ms. Anderson  
53 Bird's homing site  
56 Circle parts  
57 Subjected to surgery  
58 Judge  
59 Amnesia



by Alvin Becker

Tuesday's Puzzle solved:

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | M | O | H | E | R | A | C | R | A | T | E |
| A | V | A | L | A | X | E | L | A | I | D | E |
| V | A | N | D | A | L | I | S | M | A | I | S |
| E | N | T | E | R | S | T | O | M | A | N | E |
| S | T | A | R | E | A | T | S | E | T | A | N |
| R | E | C | R | E | A | T | S | E | T | A | N |
| A | T | E | U | P | T | A | P | L | O | G | E |
| G | A | R | R | I | E | G | R | E | E | N | E |
| A | L | V | A | S | H | E | E | R |   |   |   |
| A | L | O | N | E | S | A | T | A | N | I | C |
| S | O | N | L | E | A | S | E | O | P | E | R |
| T | I | T | L | E | V | A | N | C | O | V | E |
| O | L | E | A | N | E | T | T | R | U | N | E |
| A | I | S | E | I | T | N | E | S | T | E |   |

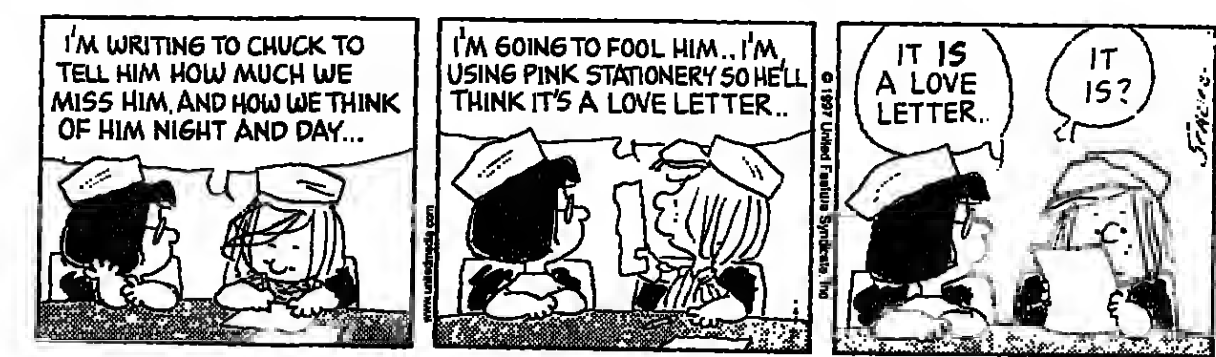
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DOWN  
2 Last of a series  
3 Appointed  
4 Queen of Spain  
5 Dead Sea —  
6 — off (tried)  
7 October gems  
8 Nurse shark  
9 Consumed  
10 Sleep aid  
11 Protect

12 Pleasant, as climate  
13 QED word  
14 Family member  
15 Charity  
16 Show excessive love  
17 For —  
18 Felony  
19 Film's Thompson  
20 Lunchtime  
21 Copper  
22 Gallinuity  
23 Kid's payoff?  
24 Nerve  
25 Code of behavior  
26 — mater  
27 Old Glory  
28 Choke with a rope: var.  
29 Baptismal oil  
30 Ship's debris  
31 Garment  
32 Madrigal museum  
33 Distinction

48 Hard as flint  
49 Front part  
50 Undolens, to Byron  
52 Kid  
54 GI address  
55 Deep sleep letters

### Peanuts



### Andy Capp



### Mutt'n'Jeff



### HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, JULY 29, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson,  
Astrologer, Carroll  
Righter Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) If you have been thinking about taking a trip today, make the arrangements at this time. You should not let anyone ruffle your feathers with a careless remark, so consider alternate methods of operation.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) If you have a good idea today which you think could improve the relationship between you and your mate, you should not hesitate to try it. Later this evening will be good for meeting with close friends for some fun.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Listen to the suggestions of a fellow associate today, and stop ignoring what could be some good ideas. Get to bed early this evening and rest up for the days ahead which will be quite hectic if not prepared.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) You should not postpone keeping any promises you have made today, since it is ideal for doing so. Don't disagree with a fellow associate or there could be words said which will be regretted and may cost your success.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) You will have some unexpected free time today, so get into that new activity you've been wanting to try. This evening should be memorable so spend it with your mate and go to some place really romantic.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Make some changes at home which today will bring more harmony and happiness there. This is a good time later this evening for any social activities which your close friends and loved ones will enjoy.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Contact friends you haven't seen for some time today, and renew those valuable relationships. Pay special attention to details in business and make sure you follow every step, thereby you won't make any serious errors in judgement.



## Saudi billionaire prince invests in Palestinian firm

The authorised capital of the company is \$100 million spread over ten million shares with a par value of \$10 per share. The paid-up capital is at present \$60 million.

Yesterday's Jumbles: JOKER GRIME ACHING FOIBLE  
 Answer: What a modern homemaker can get stuck  
 in - THE IRON AGE

† New 12 months low  
N Listed during the past 12 months  
P P/E ratio is 100 or more  
g Negative P/E  
N Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

Alternatively, investors can choose the Asian Growth option which carries a 95% capital guarantee and links investment to a "basket" of Asian stock markets comprising equal weighting of the Hong Kong and Singapore stock markets. Investors will receive 75% of the growth of the basket Index added to the 95% capital guarantee." Investments will be for a three year fixed term (38 months) and the minimum investment is US\$ 5,000 for each option. BritishBank is the largest and most widely represented international bank in the Middle East with 30 branches throughout the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Jordan and Lebanon, an offshore banking unit in Bahrain and a representative office in Palestine. The extensive regional coverage is enhanced by its associates Saudi British Bank and the Egyptian British Bank. In addition to its Middle Eastern network the bank has branches in Mumbai, Trivandrum and Baku, Azerbaijan. It also has Private Banking operations in London and Geneva.

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## Ullrich's triumph presages new era in Tour de France

BONN (R) — Thousands of jubilant, flag-waving Germans packed Bonn's main square on Monday to acclaim Tour de France king Jan Ullrich.

The first German ever to win the world's greatest cycle race seemed taken by surprise at the hero's welcome he received a day after his triumph on the Champs-Élysées.

"I didn't expect there would be so many people," said Ullrich. "It's very touching."

Hardly had one door closed on Miguel Indurain's brilliant Tour de France career than another opened on his successor Ullrich.

"We have witnessed the birth of a champion," said Tour director Jean-Marie Le Blanc as Ullrich won the French classic Sunday.

Ullrich could, though, go the way of another precocious Tour winner, Italian Felice Gimondi, who was only 22 when he triumphed for the first in 1965. Gimondi never won the race again.

But the 23-year-old German promises to be an enduring champion and



Germany's 23-year-old Tour de France winner Jan Ullrich (R) and green jersey holder Eric Zabel (L) of Germany exchange a high-five during the reception for Team Telekom in Bonn. Last year's Tour de France winner Bjarne Riis (C) from Denmark was also present (Reuters photo).

looks set to emulate Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault with a long reign.

Anquetil and Hinault were also 23 when they won the first of their five titles.



Tour de France winner Jan Ullrich of Germany parades on the Champs Élysées with a German flag. It is the first time a German has won the classic Tour de France race (Reuters photo).

Laurent Fignon was the same age when he won his first of two.

Ullrich is four years younger than his idol Indurain was when the Spaniard won the first of five consecutive titles.

Indurain predicted Ullrich's victory when the German crushed all opposition in a time trial at the end of the 1996 tour to finish second overall.

He must have seen something of himself in the east German-born youngster — perhaps the result of similarities in their upbringing amid austere surroundings and strong values.

Ullrich appeared to have killed off all competition in the Tour halfway through when he followed his remarkable stage victory in Andorra with a devastating time trial in St. Etienne to open up a lead of more than six minutes.

The signs appeared in the first Pyrenean stage when Ullrich looked to have the reserves to go out in front but stayed back out of loyalty to his team leader Bjarne Riis, the 1996 champion.

Ullrich astonished all onlookers with his strength in the saddle, never rising on to his pedals as he powered his way up the climbs in the manner of Indurain.

But fighting performances in the mountains from Frenchman Richard Virenque, backed by his Festina team, and climber supreme Marco Pantani of Italy, who had bravely overcome a terrible leg injury, kept the pot boiling almost to the finish.

Le Blanc pointed to the emergence of a foil for Ullrich in Virenque, probably sadly destined to be for the German what Italy's Claudio Chiappucci was to Indurain.

"We have seen someone (Virenque) capable of replying to (Ullrich) and must thank the presence of Marco Pantani," Le Blanc said.

Virenque hopes, however, to write a different script for future tours.

He believes he is still young enough at 27 to aspire to a victory and that he played a major part in making the 1997 Tour the second fastest ever.

"Richard knows he'll win the Tour. He doesn't know when but he knows he'll succeed one day," Festina team manager Bruno Roussel said.

Virenque finished second, one step better than last year and the highest placing for a Frenchman since Hinault's last victory in 1985.

For Ullrich, winning was the fulfillment of a dream cherished since he first watched the tour on television as a teenager at the East German national sports school in Berlin — in secret, as television was strictly prohibited for the boarders.

## Courier wins Infiniti final

LOS ANGELES (R) — Sixth-seeded Jim Courier got what he likes even more than the World No. 1 ranking when he hammered second-seeded Thomas Enqvist 6-4 6-4 Sunday to win the \$303,000 Infiniti Open.

The 26-year-old American, currently ranked 29th in the world, held the top spot for 58 weeks in 1992-93.

"It never really did matter to me," he said. "Winning tournaments has always been more tangible to me."

"You can't touch number one. It's like transcendental. It's there but you can't grasp it like you can when you last point of a tournament and the trophy is yours. Then you can feel it. Those are the moments that make all the sacrifices worth it."

Courier never dropped a set during the week and looked razor-sharp disposing of South Africa's Grant Stafford, Indian Mahesh Bhupathi, two-time champion and fourth seed Richard Krajicek of the United States and top seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia before winning the \$43,000 champion's purse.

"Three good ones in a row — Richard, Goran and today against Thomas," he said. "They're the ones you have to play well against, otherwise they're going to blow you right off the court. I was ready for them."

Courier won his 21st career title but only his second of the year after capturing Doha in January.

"I feel very solid about the way I played this week," said Courier. "It's a question of consistency. One week doesn't make it. I have to follow through with things I've been doing this week to continue to give myself good results and keep on climbing."

Courier's sizzling ground game was too much for the eighth-ranked Swede, who was denied his 12th career title following a two-month layoff with torn tendons in his left foot.

"It was hit or be hit against him," said Courier, who improved to 5-1 lifetime over the Swede. "If you don't hit, you know you're going to be on the run. I tried to take the offense as much as I could. I didn't do it all the time but I was pretty successful."

## Jones emerges as most exciting talent since Lewis

LONDON (R) — Under pelted rain in Lausanne this month, Marion Jones temporarily mislaid her technique and lost a 100 metres race to Olympic champion Gail Devers.

Two days later in Oslo, with the sun shining for the first time on this year's European Grand Prix circuit, Jones decisively reversed the result.

During the intervening evening, at the traditional strawberry party on the eve of Oslo's Bislett Games meeting, the new American champion admitted she had made technical mistakes in Lausanne.

"I learned a lot last night," she said. "I went back to the drawing board. Right after the race I knew I hadn't done what I should have done. Everybody has a race like that."

Jones, a 21-year-old native of North Carolina, is the most exciting sprinter-long jumper to emerge from the United States since Carl Lewis a generation ago and, as she showed in Norway, is evidently a quick learner.

Now she faces her biggest test since opting to switch from basketball to track and field when she steps on to the track at the Sixth World Championships starting in Athens next weekend.

"I am very confident," she said. "The most important thing is to stay healthy, my programme is to peak at the World Championships."

Jones will come up

against fellow American Gwen Torrence, granted a wild card as a defending champion, and 37-year-old Jamaican Marlene Ottey in a field which has depth, quality and vintage.

After 17 years at the top level, Ottey is still running, still winning and still not without hope of a first gold medal in the 100 metres.

"Both sprints are open this year," she said. "I feel that my best chance is in the 100 metres."

"Marion Jones is definitely a great talent but her start is not great. If I can get away from her then I believe I am strong enough to hold my lead at the end."

In turn, Ottey will defend her 200 title against Olympic champion Marie-Jose Percec who, happily for the organisers, has, along with world and Olympic 10,000 metres champion Haile Gebrselassie, had a late change of mind and decided to compete in Athens.

Percec, defeated in successive meetings in Paris and Lausanne, arrived in Athens last week and announced: "Now I am excited again. I am happy to run the 200 metres and would also be willing to do the 4x100."

The searing August heat plus the promise of a fast track will focus attention on the sprint events with the real possibility of a world record in the men's 100 metres next Sunday evening.

Donovan Bailey, the defending champion who set the current world record of 9.84 seconds in last year's Atlanta Olympic final, is the man the others will shoot for.

The Canadian defeated double Olympic champion Michael Johnson in the unsatisfactory 150 metres showdown on June 1 after the Texan pulled up injured and has been in good form on the Grand Prix circuit.

Then there is Trinidad's Ato Boldon, fastest man over both the 100 and 200 metres this year, and Olympic bronze medallist over both distances.

Boldon has prepared for a golden double with races over both events in Lausanne, Stockholm and Stuttgart.

"I pride myself on being able to do both," Boldon said on arrival in Athens.

"The schedule is very good for doubling. I certainly like my chances of doubling."

American champion Maurice Greene, whose career has been revitalised since he started training with Boldon under John Smith in California, is the American men's 100 champion and second fastest in the world this year.

"I still have things to do," Greene said. "I want to break the world record here. I have a lot of confidence in myself."

## MAJOR LEAGUE RESULTS

### American League

|             |    |            |   |
|-------------|----|------------|---|
| Boston      | 6  | Anaheim    | 5 |
| Cleveland   | 4  | Oakland    | 2 |
| Milwaukee   | 11 | Detroit    | 7 |
| Kansas City | 3  | Toronto    | 2 |
| Seattle     | 3  | NY Yankees | 2 |
| Baltimore   | 9  | Minnesota  | 0 |
| Texas       | 5  | White Sox  | 4 |

### National League

|               |    |               |   |
|---------------|----|---------------|---|
| Atlanta       | 3  | Cincinnati    | 2 |
| St Louis      | 6  | Florida       | 4 |
| Houston       | 7  | Montreal      | 2 |
| Colorado      | 4  | Chicago Cubs  | 0 |
| Los Angeles   | 7  | Philadelphia  | 1 |
| San Diego     | 5  | NY Mets       | 3 |
| San Francisco | 6  | Pittsburgh    | 5 |
| Pittsburgh    | 10 | San Francisco | 7 |

## Hingis' mother says Graf physically spent

PALO ALTO, California (R) — Melanie Molitor, the mother of World No. 1 Martina Hingis, says her daughter does not need Steffi Graf back in the game to push her because the 28-year-old former number one is physically spent.

"Steffi is physically so used already that even if she would be playing she wouldn't be the same Steffi Graf that she was before," Molitor told Reuters.

Graf, owner of 21 Grand Slam titles, has been out of action since undergoing knee surgery after the French Open. The German superstar expects to return to the tour sometime in October.

When asked who was her 16-year-old daughter's main rival now, Molitor pointed to seventh-ranked American Lindsay Davenport, who extended Hingis to three sets in the semifinals of the Bank of the West Classic Saturday, a tournament Hingis won Sunday.

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| S.N. | TENDER NO. | Subject   | Non-Refundable fee for Each Set | Closing Date 12:00 HRS Local Time |
|------|------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1-   | 34 F/97    | Supply of:<br>1- C. Steel Plates, Angles, Bars and Beams<br>2- S. Steel Plates and Bars | JD25                            | MONDAY<br>25/8/97                 |
| 2-   | 35 F/97    | Supply of:<br>Welding Electrodes  | JD15                            | MONDAY<br>25/8/97                 |

The tenders' documents are available at JPMC offices in Amman, Supply Department: until 2: 00 p.m. local time Saturday 16th August, 1997. Application for documents should be accompanied by the a/m non-refundable fee for each set of any tender document.

The closing date for submission of bids is 12:00 hrs local time for each tender at the a/m dates.

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|-------------|------------|
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| ♠ A 9       | ♠ 10 8 4 3 |
| ♥ 5 3 2     | ♥ Q J 10 9 |
| ♦ 6 5 2     | ♦ Q 10     |
| ♣ K Q 5 4 2 | ♣ J 8 7 6  |

WEST  
♠ K Q J 6 3  
♥ 7 6 5 4  
♦ A 10 9  
♣ A 10 9

SOUTH  
♠ A K 7 6 5 4  
♥ A K 8 7 6 4  
♦ A K 8 5  
♣ A 3

The bidding:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
1: 1a Pass Pass Pass  
Opening lead: King of ♠

After the opening lead of the king of spades, how would you play four hearts at duplicate? Would you adopt the same line at rubber bridge?

There is little to the auction. Once partner can make a sound of any sort, South will insist on game. West leads the king of spades. At a pair contest, where overtricks

count, correct technique is to hold up the ace of spades for one round, and win the continuation. When a heart to the king reveals the bad break, there is only one chance — West must hold a doubleton diamond and the ace of clubs. Cash the ace-king of diamonds, then exit with a club. If East has no return a black card, your diamond loser vanishes on a high club and you will be on the board to finance East for the queen of hearts. At the card line, though, you must go down a trick. Would you play the same way at rubber bridge? Only if you have no regard for your wallet. If you are prepared to give up an overtrick, you can guarantee the contract on virtually any distribution of the cards.

Win the second spade and lead a trump, moving the jack. When the finesse wins, all is well. But even if it loses, the contract is safe. Suppose West has the queen and shifts to a diamond. Who in hand, draw the outstanding trump and lead a club to the queen. The defenders can play the ace and discard the diamond loser on the king of clubs.

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**LIAR LIAR**

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CINEMA TEL:634144  
**PHILADELPHIA "2"**

Whoopi Goldberg ... in  
**EDDIE**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238  
**PLAZA**

Chris O'Donnell...in  
**MAD LOVE**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:671420  
**CONCORD**

CONCORD "1"  
Kevin Costner & Rene Russo...in  
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Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45

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Internationale's Brazilian soccer star Ronaldo is surrounded by kids before the start of the first game with his new team in the friendly match between Internazionale and Manchester in Milan (Reuters photo)

## Ronaldo makes brief Inter debut

MILAN (R) — Brazilian striker Ronaldo played his first 17 minutes of Italian soccer on Sunday but his new side Internazionale had to settle for a 1-1 draw at home to English champions Manchester United.

Ronaldo, who arrived in Italy this week after his much-publicized world record move from Barcelona, was given a rapturous reception by a 50,000-strong crowd as he ran out at the San Siro for an otherwise low-key friendly.

He forced a corner with his first touch but, that apart, was subdued by United defenders Denis Irwin and Ronny Johnsen.

After 17 minutes, with Inter 1-0 down thanks to a fine strike by United forward Nicky Butt, the world footballer of the year was replaced by Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano.

Inter President Massimo

Moratti said afterwards he was satisfied with the Brazilian's first performance but added that Ronaldo was not yet in peak condition.

"He frightens players when he runs at them but he still has some work to do on his fitness," Moratti said. Inter's other star debutant was Nigerian Nwankwo Kanu, who signed from Ajax Amsterdam a year ago but missed the whole of last season after he was diagnosed as having congenital heart disease.

The 20-year-old, who was told who could die if he continued to play football and underwent a major operation last year to correct the disorder, came on to thunderous applause with nine minutes left.

"Kanu had a quiet match for the little time he was on but I think he's an exceptional player," Moratti said. "Given time, I think he'll

settle in and be a great forward."

Debuts aside, Sunday's match was a disjointed affair, thanks in large part to the constant substitutions.

Fifteen were made in all, and goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca was the only Inter player to see out the full 90 minutes.

Bun put United ahead after latching onto a superb pass from Paul Scholes and the English champions thoroughly deserved their half-time lead.

They appeared to be heading for victory when, with 20 minutes left, England defender Gary Neville headed a seemingly harmless cross past his own goalkeeper and into the United net.

Inter won a penalty competition after the match 4-1 to claim a trophy based on the result of this one match.

# Egypt finishes on top at Pan-Arab Games amid dope shame

## Fans riot after seeing Syria lose soccer final

BEIRUT (Agencies) — As the flag of the Pan-Arab Games was handed over to Jordan which will host the next edition in 2001, the 8th Pan-Arab Games ended Sunday with Egypt the clear winner after raking in 97 gold medals. It also collected the highest number of failed dope tests.

Five of its gold winning athletes — two wrestlers, a taekwondo fighter, a boxer and volleyball player — tested positive for drugs. Their medals were suspended and may be cancelled after a final decision by the Games Committee later this week, said Rida Kuzem, head of the medical committee.

Despite the stigma, Egypt's dominance during the past 15 days was overwhelming, especially in wrestling, weightlifting and swimming where the country won a total of 65 gold medals.

Egypt also took 58 silvers and 39 bronzes, a total of 194, the highest by any country at the Arab Games since the first games were held in 1953.

Its nearest rival, Algeria, won 43 golds, 44 silvers and 47 bronzes. Morocco finished third with 19 golds, 13 silvers and 17 bronzes.

A sour note was injected on the final day when officials announced more drug violations, raising to 12 the number of athletes who have failed the dope tests.



Lebanese soldiers clean the running track after Syrian spectators wrecked hundreds of seats at Beirut's soccer stadium during the soccer final between Syria and Jordan on the last day of the Pan Arab Games. Jordan beat Syria 1-0 in the match (Reuters photo)

Besides the Egyptians, officials have also suspended — pending a final verdict — the gold medals of a Saudi Arabian and an Algerian, and the silver medal of Syria's basketball team after a player tested positive. Another Saudi has already been stripped of his discus throw gold.

The final day also was reserved for the Arab world's most popular sport, soccer.

In the final, Jordan defeated Syria 1-0, securing

the goal five minutes before the final whistle.

In Amman, Jordanians took to the streets in celebration of the victory, dancing, firing guns into the air, honking car horns and waving the national flag.

Angry Syrian fans broke the plastic chairs and hurled water bottles on the players, disrupting the game for some minutes.

Some 30,000 Syrians destroyed an estimated 400 seats and hurled rubbish

and empty bottles at the players while Syrian players beat and kicked Lebanese photographers, witnesses said.

The Lebanese army evacuated the stadium but no casualties were reported in the incidents.

Beirut's stadium, destroyed by Israeli bombs in the civil war, was rebuilt for the games at a cost of \$50 million.

The Games had started with controversy when Lebanon, under pressure



from and influential Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, barred 97 Iraqi athletes from competing.

They were stranded at the Syrian-Lebanese border without visas for two days before heading home.

The Games were the first major international event staged in the Lebanese capital since the end of the 1975-1990 civil war.

Of the 19 countries that participated, only two failed to win any medals — Djibouti, which had sent only one athlete, and Mauritania.

Held at a cost of \$8 million, the Games did much to boost Lebanon's efforts to show that it has recovered from 15 years of internecine fighting that ended in 1990.

"We have asserted that Lebanon is able to face up the challenge and he steadfast," said Osman Saad, head of the Arab Sports Federation.

## Sampras leads ATP rankings

MONACO (R) — Leading rankings issued by the ATP Tour on Monday:

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Pete Sampras (U.S.)             | 5,388 points |
| 2. Michael Chang (U.S.)            | 3,743        |
| 3. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia)      | 2,788        |
| 4. Alex Corretja (Spain)           | 2,409        |
| 5. Thomas Muster (Austria)         | 2,407        |
| 6. Sergi Bruguera (Spain)          | 2,275        |
| 7. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia)     | 2,224        |
| 8. Thomas Enqvist (Sweden)         | 2,223        |
| 9. Marcelo Rios (Chile)            | 2,143        |
| 10. Carlos Moya (Spain)            | 2,133        |
| 11. Felix Mantilla (Spain)         | 2,003        |
| 12. Boris Becker (Germany)         | 1,918        |
| 13. Gustavo Kuerten (Brazil)       | 1,859        |
| 14. Mark Philippoussis (Australia) | 1,858        |
| 15. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands) | 1,752        |
| 16. Petr Korda (Czech Republic)    | 1,677        |
| 17. Albert Costa (Spain)           | 1,658        |
| 18. Tim Henman (Britain)           | 1,584        |
| 19. Patrick Rafter (Australia)     | 1,560        |
| 20. Todd Woodbridge (Australia)    | 1,539        |

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## Hingis beats Martinez in California final

PALO ALTO, California (R) — World No. 1 Martina Hingis showed off her entire repertoire in crushing a lethargic Conchita Martinez 6-0 6-2 in the final of the \$450,000 Bank of the West Classic Sunday.

The 53-minute win was the 16-year-old's 50th match victory of the year with only one loss, the French Open final against Iva Majoli.

It was also the first time that Hingis has defended a title. She won the Bank of the West last November over Monica Seles when it was played indoors.

Hingis was never seriously tested by Martinez, who did not finish her doubles semifinal on Saturday night until midnight, went to sleep at 2 a.m. and woke up six hours later to prepare for the noon final.

The sixth-seeded Spaniard said Saturday evening that the scheduling was unfair and that she would likely be tired for the match. Martinez appeared to be resigned to the fact that she would lose the moment she walked on the court.

"Physically and mentally I just wasn't prepared," said Martinez, who won only 33 points in the match while committing 35 unforced errors. "I was really tired. The only thing I could do is try to fight and not get down on myself."

Hingis said that her 0-2 record against Martinez entering the match gave her extra motivation.

"There was a little bit of that," the Swiss star said. "It was another challenge. It was over a year ago that I last played her (a 6-2 6-2 loss at the 1996 Italian Open) and I wanted to see how much I had improved."

While Martinez set up points well during the match, nearly every time she had an opportunity to put the ball away, she would either push it wide or dump it into the net.

"I was really sore and I couldn't run to balls well enough to really hit them," Martinez said.

Still, the 25-year-old Martinez said that because she beat Monica Seles for the first time during her week here, she believes her career has taken a turn for the better.

"I'm back in the top 10 and that's very important to me," Martinez said. "Hopefully the next time I play her I won't be so tired."

The 1.68 metres Hingis was so confident the match was in her pocket that in the second set, she began to serve and volley at will, an unusual tactic for a player with a mediocre first serve.

When asked whether there is a part of her game she can still improve, Hingis replied: "Which one do you think?"

When the reporter responded that her second serve still needs work, Hingis shot back: "Well, I understand I served 92 per cent with my first serve today. If I keep doing that, I guess I won't need to worry about my second serve."

The Bank of the West was Hingis's ninth title of the year. She will begin play at the Toshiba Classic in San Diego, California, on Wednesday, and will play in Manhattan Beach, California, the following week.

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His Majesty King Hussein greets Jiryes Tadros, the popular soccer performer who scored the winning goal in Jordan's match for gold against Syria Sunday night, at Amman Airport, Monday (Photo by Youssef Allan)



Jordan's heroes come back home carrying the gold



Jordan's sports teams met by a line-up of royalty and officials, Monday, upon stepping off the military airplane which took them home to national celebrations. Crowds were awaiting at the airport to accompany them on a drive all over Amman (Photo by Youssef Allan)

## Pan-Arab Games reflect deep inter-Arab tensions

Football teasing at games angered many teams

BEIRUT (AFP) — The Eighth Pan-Arab Games hosted by Lebanon this month reflected the deep-rooted political tensions in the Middle East as violent incidents frequently broke out between rival fans and players.

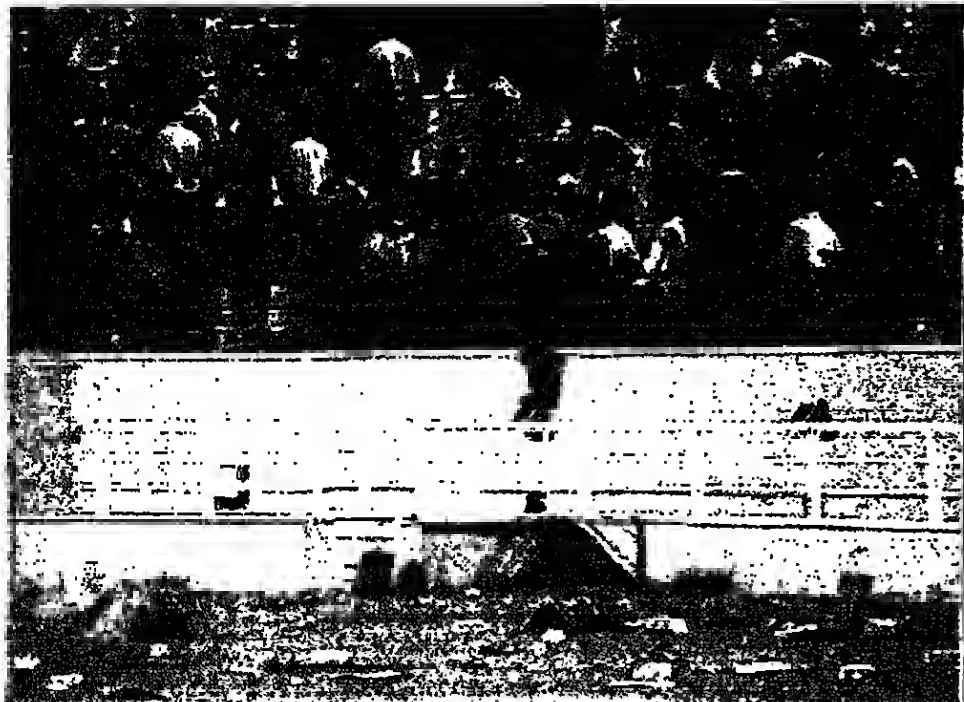
The July 12-27 games, initially promised as an opportunity to show the unity of the Arab Umma (nation), were more often marred by inter-Arab factions. Lebanon began the games by banning Iraq from taking part under strong pressure from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, which both provided funding to rebuild the sports city in Beirut where the competitions were held.

But Iraq defied the move by sending 95 athletes who travelled by land via Syria and remained stranded for several days at the Syrian-Lebanese border before returning back home hours before the opening ceremony.

The move came despite recent efforts to revive Lebanese-Iraqi relations, severed after the 1994 assassination of a leading Iraqi dissident in Beirut.

But Lebanese spectators, contradicting their country's official stand, teased Kuwaiti players during a basketball game by chanting "Saddam, Saddam" — in reference to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, whose troops were driven out of Kuwait by a U.S.-led international coalition in 1991.

During a football game between Lebanon and Libya,



Syrian soccer fans leave Beirut sport city after breaking hundreds of chairs in the newly-built complex in frustration over their national team's loss to Jordan in the Pan-Arab Games soccer finals, Sunday. Jordan took home the gold medal by beating Syria 1-0 (AFP photo)

Lebanese spectators raised large portraits of Imam Musa Sadr, founder of the pro-Syrian Amal movement who disappeared on a trip to Libya in 1978, drawing anger from the Libyan crowd and prompting army troops to confiscate the posters.

The games also witnessed an unprecedented public show of hostile feelings among the Lebanese against Syria, which maintains 35,000 troops and an army of intelligence services agents in its tiny neighbouring country.

Lebanese spectators, expressing their long-held frustration, which was heightened by the defeat of their country at the semi-finals against Syria last week, cheered the Jordanian team throughout the final game on Sunday.

They even unanimously booed Syrian players as they stepped on the podium to receive the silver medal after the game, during which thousands of Syrian fans wrecked chairs and bombarded the track encircling the stadium

with bottles of water.

A Syrian player also harassed a Lebanese photographer, triggering the interference of Lebanese army soldiers and prompting whistles and anti-Syrian insults from Lebanese spectators.

During the semifinal game, tens of thousands of Lebanese spectators shouted "Syria, Syria, get out" as Syrian fans responded by chanting: "With soul, with blood, we shall redeem you (Syrian President Hafez Assad)."

Fist fights broke out outside the stadium as Syrian soldiers in Beirut and other bases in nearby mountains celebrated by firing machine-gun rounds into the air.

Even before the games had started, a dispute over the name of the sports city in Beirut nearly provoked a political crisis in Lebanon.

Rafik Hariri, the billionaire Muslim Sunni prime minister, wanted to re-name the complex to Beirut Sports City to push the idea of Lebanese unity after it had long been named after former Christian President Camille Chamoun.

The move... angered President Elias Hrawi and other Christian leaders who accused Mr. Hariri of attempting to harm their community, which already feels threatened and frustrated at Beirut's pro-Syrian government after the 1975-1990 civil war.

During the opening ceremony of the July 12-27 games, Mr. Hrawi finally declared that the complex, a symbol of Lebanon's pre-war golden days, will remain the Camille Chamoun Sports City.

## Denktash lashes out ahead of Cyprus talks

NICOSIA (AFP) — Turkish-Cypriot leaders accused the governments of Cyprus and Greece Monday of trying to weaken Turkey's role in a future peace accord, ahead of talks aimed at forging concrete steps towards a solution.

The leaders of the two communities on the divided eastern Mediterranean island are to meet in Nicosia for U.N.-sponsored talks late Monday, their second face-to-face meeting this month.

But Turkish-Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, accused Greece and Greek-Cypriot authorities of wanting to "weaken in a future accord Turkey's role as guarantor of the island."

"Turkey has historic, geopolitical and contractual rights over Cyprus," said Mr. Denktash, whose breakaway Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is recognised only by Ankara.

"It is a question of a Turkish-Greek balance... the Cyprus problem cannot be solved without Turkey's contribution," he said, the Turkish news agency Anadolu reported.

Mr. Denktash is to meet Cyprus President Glafcos Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot, at 6 p.m. at the home of the U.N. special representative to Cyprus, Gustav Feissel, in the buffer zone dividing the two communities.

The two veteran politicians met earlier this month in New

York, their first encounter in three years, after a year of heightened tensions amid ethnic clashes and Turkish threats of military retaliation over a Greek-Cypriot plan to deploy air-defence missiles.

The two leaders have agreed to discuss humanitarian issues, but once they are there, they can talk about anything," Mr. Feissel told AFP.

However, Greek-Cypriot officials deny there will be an open agenda, saying Mr. Clerides will address "only specific humanitarian issues" including the 450 Greek-Cypriots and Maronites living in the Turkish-Cypriot north and the fate of 1,619 Greek-Cypriots missing since the 1974 Turkish invasion.

Mr. Denktash also accused the European Union of setting a trap by inviting Cyprus for membership talks, a move that has sparked Turkish threats to integrate the TRNC.

"It is a trap which aims to split us from Turkey and lead to a victory of Hellenism in the Cyprus problem," he said.

However, Britain's high commissioner in Cyprus, David Madden, said he did not believe the EU issue would be an obstacle and said he hoped Mr. Denktash would attend the next round of talks in Montreux, Switzerland, from August 11-16.

## Albright body guard shoots himself in the foot

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — A security agent guarding U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright here accidentally shot himself in the foot, the State Department said Monday.

The accident happened when the bodyguard was on duty on Friday evening in the Sunway Lagoon Hotel here, where Albright is staying during the annual Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) meeting, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

"He was checking his weapon," Burns said. "He shot himself in the foot, the bullet went right through." The agent, who has not been named, spent several hours in hospital but was walking the next day and returned to Washington Monday.

With beards, beer and bulls, Key West honours 'papa'

KEY WEST (R) — Displaying grace under pressure before a boisterous, beer-swilling crowd, Bart Barton, an insurance adjuster from Deerfield Beach, Florida, won the annual Ernest Hemingway look-alike contest in Sloppy Joe's bar in Key West, Florida, Monday.

White-bearded, amply girthed and dressed in a cable-knit fisherman's sweater and khaki shorts just like "papa" used to wear, beat 20 other finalists who shambled onto the stage of Hemingway's old haunt on the island's Duval Street. The contest was the highlight of the Hemingway Days Festival, which had nearly died after organisers locked horns with the late writer's sons over the right to use his name. This was the 63-year-old Barton's sixth try in the look-alike contest and he defeated about 90 other "papas" from across the United States.

Malaysia 'scorpion king' aims for record

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — A Malaysian snake charmer who emerged after staying in a glass booth with thousands of deadly scorpions for 21 days, sought a listing in the Guinness Book of World Records. "I wanted to show that a Malaysian can do it despite being stung 99 times in the 21 days," said Ali Khan Shamsuddin, now known as both "snake king" and "scorpion king" in Malaysia. Ali began his feat on July 5 with 5,000 scorpions. Half-way through, he had to add another 1,280 scorpions to his booth when a spectator to the event doubted that the ones Ali kept were using were deadly. The snake charmer, who is a well-known figure in the local community, had caught in a jungle. The man was nowhere to be seen when Ali emerged victorious from his booth.

Italyans carry on with Yemen holiday after kidnap adventure

SANAA (AFP) — Two Italian tourists carried on with their vacation Monday after spending two days as hostages of Yemeni tribesmen, the Italian embassy said.

"The two tourists are okay. They were well treated by the tribal sheikh and the villagers. They are going to leave the country Wednesday as planned" after doing more sight-seeing, Attaché Roberto Vesperini told AFP.

Luigi Archetti, an engineer, and Maria Paola Moriconi, a psychologist, both around 40 and from Rome, were kidnapped Saturday on the road from the Yemeni capital south to Taiz.

A local governor intervened and went to the house of the kidnappers to secure the release of the couple late Sunday, Mr. Vesperini said.

The couple, along with their Yemeni driver and Ethiopian guide who were snatched and freed at the same time, were welcomed on their return by Interior Minister Colloel Hussein Arab and Italian embassy officials.

A Yemeni official said the latest kidnapping was "the work of a gang manipulated from abroad which wants to harm the country's image."

It was the first case of

Italyans being abducted since October 1993. But more than 80 foreigners have been kidnapped by Yemeni tribes since 1993. All have been released unharmed after being used as bargaining chips to try to win concessions from the government.

In the last case, four elderly Germans were kidnapped by the Jihm tribe in March and held for two weeks, until their release by security forces. Earlier the same month, seven German motorcycle tourists were held for 10 days.

Germany and Italy are the main markets for tourism to cash-strapped Yemen.

## Lawyers deny calling for crucifixion of British nurses after their execution

DUBAI (AFP) — Lawyers for the family of an Australian woman slain in Saudi Arabia denied Monday calling for two British nurses on trial in an Islamic court to be crucified after execution if they are convicted of murder.

The International Law Firm (ILF), in a telephone call to Agence France Presse (AFP) in Dubai, said it made no such request at the latest hearing. "It's legally impossible," said a lawyer for the Riyadh-based firm.

AFP Sunday quoted an ILF official as saying that the request was made at the hearing the same day before the Islamic court in Khobar, eastern Saudi Arabia. The official asked not to be named.

The Gulf Arab kingdom, which strictly enforces Islamic law, crucifies the bodies of convicts who have been executed if their crimes are particularly heinous.

Lucille McLauchlan, 31, and Deborah Parry, 41, stand accused of killing and robbing their Australian colleague Yvonne Gilford.

They risk being beheaded if found guilty.

The families of the Britons, meanwhile, were to meet the women Monday for a second time before flying home. A British diplomat said. The meeting was to take place in Dammam, where the women have been held in jail since December.

McLauchlan's mother and father, Ann and Stan, and Parry's sister Sandra and brother-in-law Jonathon Ashbee are booked to return to Britain Tuesday, the embassy spokesman said. They already visited the nurses Saturday.

The trial for the killing of 55-year-old Gilford has been adjourned until August 10, on a legal technicality. Neither the nurses nor their families attended the last session.

Defence lawyers said the three-judge panel was "leaning towards disqualifying the Gilford family from any participation in determining the fate of the two nurses."

In Islamic law, a victim's family has the right to spare the lives of a relative's killers and accept a finan-

cial settlement, under a provision called "Diya" in Arabic.

At its previous session on July 7, the panel recognised Gilford's brother Frank as the closest surviving relative along with their ailing mother Muriel. Frank Gilford has so far refused to consider the option of mercy.

But the defence firm said the court has given it two weeks to prove that the elderly mother, who lives in a nursing home and is said to be suffering from Alzheimer's disease, was not mentally competent to make a decision.

"We expect the court will then refuse to impose the death penalty even if requested by Frank Gilford or will require the appointment of an independent individual to represent the interests of Mrs. Gilford," it said in a statement.

"Upon demonstration of the mental condition of the mother, the court will most probably demand a guardian to be appointed by an Australian court, or the Australian court will assume this role," said the

firm of Salah Al Hejailan.

"Frank Gilford will not be considered in this situation to become a guardian on the basis of conflict of interest and the inflexible and contradictory position publicly taken by him during the last few months," it said.

The defence firm, which has for weeks challenged the brother's right to determine the fate of the nurses if convicted, did not elaborate. The trial started on May 19 and has been closed to the media. But lawyers for the defence and for the victim's family have attended, along with Australian and British diplomats.

The Australian woman's body was found on December 11 in her dormitory at King Fahd military medical complex in Dhahran, also near Khobar. She had been stabbed 13 times, beaten and suffocated. The nurses initially confessed to the murder, referring to a lesbian relationship. But they later retracted the confessions, saying they had been physically and mentally abused by interrogators.

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The three other hijackers were killed when German special forces stormed the plane in Mogadishu.

Ms. Ansari was tracked down by Norwegian police in 1994 and arrested, after having lived in Norway since 1991. After a long legal battle in Norway, she

was extradited to Germany to stand trial.

She will be eligible for a reprieve after serving half of her sentence, if German authorities grant their consent. That means Ansari could be free in just over two years, as years under arrest in Norway are included in her sentence.

According to Mr. Bache-Wilg, Ms. Ansari, who has a young daughter living in Norway, is in need of surgery, suffering from severe knee and back injuries caused by gunshot wounds suffered during the hijacking.

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OSLO (AFP) — Palestinian hijacker Soraya Ansari, jailed in Germany since November for the 1977 hijacking of a German airliner, will arrive in Oslo Tuesday to serve the rest of her 12-year sentence, her lawyer said Monday.

"I can confirm that she will come on Tuesday. Norwegian police have also confirmed that," Heidi Bache-Wilg said.

Ms. Ansari, 44, was in November found guilty by a Hamburg court of being an accessory to the murder of Juergen Schumann, the German pilot of a Lufthansa

plane hijacked to Somalia in 1977.

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